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Special Guest Editor

Prof. Tom Calhoun (USA)

Department of Criminal Justice and Sociology
Jackson State University, Jackson, MS 39217, USA.

E-mail: thomas.c.calhoun@jsums.edu

Editors

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Institute of Distance Education, Mulungushi University
Great North Road Campus
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E-mail: annesikwibele@yahoo.com

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E-mail: ADEKANMB@mopipi.ub.bw
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E-mail: joelbabalola2000@yahoo.co.uk

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E-mail: juliemach@yahoo.com

Dr. Segun Adedeji
Department of Educational Management,
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E-mail: Soadejei_dr@yahoo.co.uk

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Department of Educational Foundations,
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Lagos, Nigeria
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Institute of Education,
University of Ibadan, Nigeria
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E. **References** should strictly follow the most current APA style.

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G. **Figures** are referred to for all drawings, diagrams, graphs and photographs. These should be of the highest quality and suitable for direct
reproduction. Each figure should be presented within the body of the paper.

H. **An abstract** of 150 words is included for articles

I. **The author’s profile** is completed and updated.

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| 1. | Networks as Opportunities for Knowledge Creation Among Professionals: How optimized by Counsellor Educators? | 7-25 |
| 2. | Assessing the Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-Educational Needs of Nursing Students at Millikin University | 26-40 |
| 3. | Partnering for Effective Educational Researching for Development | 41-57 |
| 5. | Measures to Combat Research Phobia Among Undergraduates for Knowledge Creation in Imo State | 77-86 |
| 6. | Managing Research Output for Knowledge Creation In South-South Nigerian Universities | 87-100 |
Networks as Opportunities for Knowledge Creation among Professionals:

How Optimized by Counsellor Educators?

OBI, Ifeoma E.

ifyobi25@yahoo.com

+234 8036 727 909

Department of Education Foundation

Faculty of Education.

Anambra State University, Uli

Abstract

Knowledge creation involves the generation of new ideas, facts and insights through interaction with people to meet challenges and changes. Online and offline Professional groups and networks are some of the avenues for generating new knowledge and innovation in practices. Guidance Counselling is one the areas that needs to constantly remain abreast with the dynamics of human life and social relations. A number of opportunities abound to help Counsellor Educators and professional Counsellors in higher institutions create knowledge to improve their practices and make more impact on lives. This work examined the extent counsellor educators exploit these opportunities. Three research questions guided the study. A sample of 63 counsellor educators drawn from higher institutions in Anambra and Enugu States was used for the study. Simple and multiple response percentage were the methods used in analyzing data obtained through the questionnaire. Results show that most of the counsellor educators were not aware of the existence of these networks and such do not belong to most of them. It was also found that the opportunities for facilitating knowledge creation available in the networks were not optimized by counsellor educators. A number of suggestions were given to help facilitate the awareness and maximization of these current opportunities.
Keywords: Networks, Online communities, counsellor educators, knowledge creation, opportunities.

Introduction

The provision of quality counselling services to the Nigerian clientele depends largely on the quality of preparation given to counselors-in-training. Counsellor educators are at the heart of this pedagogical process and as such should be responsive to the innovations in research and in the teaching and learning process if they will make significant contribution to the field. This is because counselling is among the professions which changes fast and as such “new information about counselling approaches and techniques emerge every day the world over” (Aluede, 2010). Considering that a number of internal factors have made the Nigerian Counselling professions capacity to respond to the relevant and emergent areas of concern in the society very doubtful (Aluede, Ilu, Adomeh & Afen-Akpida, 2004), it is therefore necessary that counsellor educators position themselves within relevant sources and reservoirs of knowledge (both national and international) to draw input for their knowledge creation in the profession.

This resonate Dembitz’s (cited in McFadyen, Semadeni & Cannella, 2009) position that “because an individual’s capacity to acquire and use knowledge is limited, interactions with others are essential to knowledge creation.” It then means that the Counsellor educators have to connect, interact and relate with others in order to generate new ideas and new knowledge. Networks, whether social or professional, is one of the major avenues for achieving these.

The advent of the internet has made it possible to move beyond one’s local networks to connect and interact without geographical boundaries and barriers. Consequently, we now live in “network society” - a new kind of society based on computers and information technologies and characterized by new networks of relating (Castell cited in Macionis & Plummer, 2000). With 43,982,200 and 1,718,000 Nigeria’s internet and facebook users (InternetWorldStats, 2010), many are poise to draw from the opportunities presented by these
networks. Counsellor educators should not be left out if they must generate new knowledge and expand the field. However, counselor educators need requisite technology competence to benefit from these innovations (Baggerly, 2001). Therefore, is work will examine the extent counsellor educators in tertiary institutions in Anambra and Enugu States harness these new opportunities.

**Theoretical and Empirical Review**

Knowledge creation is generation of facts, relationships and insights that are new to the existing body of knowledge (Arrow, 1962 cited in McFadyen, Semadeni & Cannella, 2009). Although new knowledge is intangible when it is created, it can be converted into tangible forms like publications, new products, amongst others (Noneka & Takeuchi, 1995). Knowledge creation process is driven by individuals as they acquire and develop overlapping as well as diverse knowledge resources through interaction with others (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990; Nonaka, 1994; Spender, 1996). It is therefore dependent on the ability of members in a group to connect, exchange and combine existing information, knowledge and ideas. This networking as viable means of facilitating knowledge creation has earned support from vast body of literature (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Huberman, 2001; Strehle, Whatley, Kurz & Hausfather, 2001; Lin, Lin & Huang, 2008).

One form network that feature widely in literature is professional networks. According to Lin, 2001(cited in McFadyen, Semadeni and Cannella, 2009), they embody a person’s direct exchange partners as well as knowledge or other resources that may be acquired through those partners. There seem to be consensus among scholars that knowledge creation and professional network are inextricably linked as network are central to the combination and exchange process (Bounty, 2000; Tsai & Ghoshal, 1998).

Fortunately, the affordances of the internet facilitate connection and interactions among peoples from any part of the world, thereby enhancing the potency of networking among professionals. These are called online networks or online communities (Tam, 2008).
Ever since the development of the first social network in 1997, there has been rapid growth in online social network with Facebook and Myspace being the leading social networks. The introduction of LinkedIn (where over 120 million professionals exchange information and ideas) has recorded a new direction in which professional network was given more prominence (Tam, 2008; Olsen, 2008; Deisboeck & Sagotsky, 2010). However, the features of these other social networks allow for the development of professional networking within the interface. For instance, Active Learning Group, Teacher2Teacher Networks, amongst others, is all embedded within the Facebook social network (Conversation.Net, 2011).

In various professions, a number of online networks such as Biomed Experts [http://www.biomedexperts.com/] which bring professional social-networking to the medical research world. Others include Spidera [http://spidera.eu], a European Commission-supported social network that operates as an interface of academia and small-to-medium enterprises in the health care and life sciences domain, Nature Network [http://network.nature.com], which is a professional networking site for scientists worldwide, and CViT.org [https://www.cvit.org], an NIH/NCI-supported online community dedicated to supporting cancer modeling and simulation (Deisboeck & Sagotsky, 2010). In the field related to counselling, there exists the http://www.therapnetworking.com/, an online networking where therapists, counselors, psychologists and psychiatrists meet and share ideas.

The argument that these online networks are most targeted for and used by the youth is fast losing ground as statistics show that they are gaining popularity among the older generation (Goad & Mooney, 2008). Although Livingstone (2007) proposes that both their risks and opportunities should be considered, much argument against the use of online networks abound. These include issue of privacy, confidentiality, ethical concerns, amongst others (Rosenblum, 2007; Helminen, 2008; Cain, 2008; Bratt, 2010). In spite of these, there are growing theoretical and empirical evidences on their significant contribution to knowledge exchange and knowledge creation.
According to Wang, Yang and Chou (2008), they provide fertile and sustainable environment for knowledge creation by supplying collaborative tools that have few equivalents with physical world and bring together educators with common interest, who may be far apart geographically. Indeed, there is considerable agreement among scholars that online networks show strong potential to empower educators to collaborate, share resources and practice; experts, extend their own learning and solve problems more efficiently and systematically as well as stimulate knowledge creation (Goodyear & Zenios, 2007; Chen, Chen & Isai, 2009; Zenios & Holmes 2010; Duncan-Howell, 2010). Others noted the opportunities it provides for international collaborations and research (Yegani, 2009; Henson & Rodewald, 1995).

In an empirical study by McFadyen, Semadeni and Cannella (2009), it was seen that the strength of the ties networks (as measure by the frequency of interactions among members) was significantly related to their knowledge creation (as measured by volume of members’ publications). In a study by Olsen (2008), it was found that some professionals find LinkedIn very crucial in connecting other professionals and accessing resources that ordinarily would have difficult to obtain offline. In a similar study of niche professional networks by Tam (2008), it was found that, although the social Network affords professionals opportunity to interact and access resources, some were not motivated to use it. Reports by East-West Digital News (2011) show similar low trend in Russia as only 28% of the internet users make use of online professional networks. Limited access to networks was seen by Durbin (2011, p.90) as allowing “involvement in the exchange and creation of tacit knowledge….”

These various online networks and communities provide countless opportunities for many professions including the counselling profession. In view of the fact that counselling education in Nigeria is still at its cradle and has numerous problems such publish or perish practice that drastically water down the quality of publications and the isolation experienced by most scholars, the need to optimize these opportunities is much more now than ever.
Statement of the Problem

The shortage of quality books which have been the major sources of knowledge input and isolation of the counselling profession from other allied fields and profession have been a source of concern for the counselling profession in Nigeria (Aluede et al., 2004). Indeed, the isolation of the scholars within the profession from other scholars in developed countries is a barrier to their capacity for knowledge creation (Weiler, Guri-Rosenblit & Sawyer, 2008). Yet, Counsellors and Counsellor Educators are expected to become active researchers to be able to develop and publish the much-needed counselling materials that would significantly impact on the future training of counselors and Nigerian society.

Online networks and communities provide countless opportunities for many professions including the counselling profession. In view of the fact that counselling education in Nigeria is still at its cradle and has numerous problems such as publish or perish practice that drastically water down the quality of publications and the isolation experienced by most scholars, the need to optimize these opportunities is much more now than ever. This work therefore asks: Are counsellor educators in Anambra and Enugu States’ tertiary system aware of these opportunities? If they are, how much of these opportunities do they maximize?

Research Questions

1. To what extent are counsellor educators aware of the networks that facilitate knowledge creation in their profession?
2. What proportion of counsellor educators belong to networks that facilitate knowledge creation?
3. To what extent do counsellor educators optimize online networks to facilitate knowledge creation?

Method

The research design employed in this study was a descriptive survey which set out to find out the extent Counsellor Educators optimizes the opportunities that networks provide to facilitate knowledge creation in their profession.
The study was carried out in all the Federal and State owned higher Institutions (Colleges of Education and Universities) in Anambra and Enugu States. The population of the study consisted of all the 116 Counsellor Educators. Simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 72 Counsellor Educators.

An instrument called Opportunities for Knowledge Creation among Counsellor Educators (OKCCE) was designed using works from the literature. OKCCE has four sections. Section A elicited information on the respondents background such as gender, institution and internet proficiency. The internet proficiency was rated on a continuum: 1 – 10. Section B sought information on respondents’ awareness of networks/communities. Section C elicited information on Counsellor educators’ membership of network/communities. Section D contains six (6) items which sought information on how often they engage in various activities within the network/community that facilitate knowledge creation in the past one year.

The questionnaire was duly validated. The initial draft of the instrument was given to two lecturers from Department of Guidance and Counselling from Nnamdi Azikiwe University. The lecturers reviewed the instrument and their corrections were reflected in the final version of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was established by test re-test method. Data obtained were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. The copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents with the help of six trained research assistants who visited various higher institutions in Anambra and Enugu States. Of the 72 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 63 were returned indicating 87.5% return rate which is adjudged to be adequate for the study.

Simple and Multiple response percentages were used to analyse the data gathered. Multiple responses are a method of analyzing questionnaire data when respondents are expected to respond to more than one option. It enables the researcher to see all options relative to each option selected by the respondents. It shows percentage of responses which refers to the proportion of a given response in relation to the total responses and percentage of cases which is the proportion of a given response in relation to the number of total cases.
(Respondents). The respondents rating of their internet proficiency (1 – 10) was categorized as follows: 1-2 = Very Low; 3 – 4 = Low; 5 – 6 = Average; 7 – 8 = High and 9 – 10 = Very High.

**Results**

Using simple and multiple response percentages, the researcher analyzed background and substantive data derived from the questionnaire. The results from the background data was presented followed by the substantive data.

**Table 1. Some Respondents’ Background Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background information</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Education</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Proficiency:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 above shows that greater proportion (61.9%) of the respondents was females. Most of the respondents were also from colleges of education as shown by the 41 (65.1%) of the respondents in that category. In terms of the proficiency level of the respondents, taken cumulatively (very low and low), 33.3% were on the low proficiency level, 38.1% were on the average while 28.6% (cumulatively) were on the high proficiency level.

Research Question 1:

To what extent are counsellor educators aware of the networks that facilitate knowledge creation in their profession?

Table 2. Multiple Response Percentages on Counsellor Educators Awareness of Networks that Facilitate Knowledge Creation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percent of Cases (N=59)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face to face professional learning Networks</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Online Professional Networks</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Social/Informal Networks</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Online Networks</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offline Professional Association</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Excluding 4 Non-Responses

Table 2 above shows that of the 165 endorsements made against the five networks options presented to the respondents, they were mostly aware of offline professional association. This is shown by the 52 (31.5%) endorsements it received by 88.1% of the respondents. This was followed by face-to-face professional learning networks with 41 (24.8%) endorsements by
69.5% of the respondents. Among the online networks, online social/informal networks had the highest (22.4%) endorsement by 62.7% of the respondents while formal online professional networks had the least 7.3% by 20.3% of the respondents. This shows that counsellor educators were more aware of the traditional networks but were less aware of the online networks/communities.

**Research Question 2**

What proportion of counsellor educators belong to Networks that facilitate knowledge creation?

Table 3. Percentage Responses on Counsellor Educators Membership of Networks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members Online Networks/communities</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members, Face to Face/Offline Networks</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that of the 63 respondents, 28 (44.4%) were members of the online networks/communities, 23 belong to the face-to-face networks, while 12 representing 19% of the respondents do not belong to any of the networks. Using multiple response percentages, table 4 shows that of the online networks, general online networks had the greatest membership as shown by the 19 (45.2%) endorsements. This was followed by online social/informal networks with 13 (31%) endorsements, while the least was formal online professional networks. This finding suggests that most counsellor educators belong to general online networks while smaller proportion belongs to online professional networks.
Table 4. Multiple Response Percentages on Counsellor Educators’ membership of online networks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percent of Cases (N=28)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Online Professional Networks</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Social/Informal Networks</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Online Networks</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 3

To what extent do counsellor educators optimize the knowledge creation opportunities in online networks?

Table 5. Percentage Responses on counsellor educators use of online networks to facilitate knowledge creation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sought for and received information from group that help you successfully accomplish an academic project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once per year</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times per year</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Received diverse inputs from members on approaches to problems/challenging situation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once per year</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times per year</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>once per month</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Received expert advice through interaction with members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>46.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once per year</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times per year</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>once per month</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once per year</td>
<td>N 12</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times per year</td>
<td>N 3</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>N 14</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once per year</td>
<td>N 11</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times per year</td>
<td>N 3</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>N 19</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once per year</td>
<td>N 9</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows the various activities that can facilitate knowledge creation and the frequency of engagement in each within the past one year. In terms of seeking and obtaining information from network members to accomplish academic project, of the 28 respondents that belong to one or two of the online networks, 16 respondents representing 57% said that
they never engaged in that activity in the past one year, 6 (21%) had done so, while 6 (21%) engaged in that several times in the past one year.

On receiving diverse inputs from members on approaches to problems/challenging situations, greater proportion (53.6%) had engage in that once per year, this was followed by 28.6% that benefitted several times in the past one while the least number (2) received diverse inputs once per month in the past one year

In terms of receiving expert advice through interaction with members, 13 (46.4%) respondents had never had such experience. This was followed by 8 (28.6%) who had received. On the other hand, only 2 (7.1%) received advice once per month in the past one year.

On collaborating with members on research plan and implementation, greater proportion (46.4%) had not engaged in that. This was followed by 42.9% that engaged in it once per year and 10.7% said that had collaborated on research several times in the past one year.

In relation to participating in virtual/online workshops, 14 (50%) had never engaged in it, 11 (39.3) engaged in it once per year, while 3 (10.7%) said that had engaged in virtual workshops and conference several times past one year.

On the issue of publishing or co-author a book, greater proportion 19(67.9%) said they had not while 9 respondents representing 32.1% said they had done that once in the past one year.

Of the 6 activities that members of online networks frequently participate in for knowledge creation, the respondents were involved in only two. These suggest that the interaction with online network members on activities that facilitate knowledge creation was minimal.

**Discussion of Finding**

This study was interested in examining the extent counsellor educators optimize the opportunities presented by networks available for knowledge creation. The results of the study revealed that counsellor educations were more aware of the traditional networks than online networks/communities. Again, greater proportion does not belong to any online...
Networks/communities. This seem to correspond with the report by East-West Digital News (2011) and Tam’s (2008) finding indicating that some professionals do not belong to the online professional networks. It would seem reasonable to adduce that low awareness of the opportunities offered by these online networks, the fear of lost of privacy and lethargy towards change could be among the factors of non-involvement in online networks by Counsellor Educators. While these may all be tenable, it is obvious that their capacity to generate new knowledge which online networks/communities offer would be highly limited. The researcher, therefore, would seem to agree with Livingstone (2009), who warns against the polarization of the affordances of online networks.

Another relevant finding recorded by this study was that counsellor educators’ interaction with online network members on activities that facilitate knowledge creation is minimal. Various forms of knowledge creation inputs were mostly not accessed and utilized. One of the plausible reasons for this situation is their lack of sufficient proficiency in the use of the internet (See respondents’ background information in table 1). As observed by Baggerly (2001), only counsellor educators with high level of technology competence would benefit from the innovations accruing from information technologies that are essential for counsellor education. Apart from the issue of competency, it has been noted that most people use online networks, particularly the social oriented ones, for making new friends and cultivating friendship rather than for knowledge exchange.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

The challenges facing counselling profession in Nigeria call upon counsellor educators to generate new knowledge to bolster the principles and practice of guidance and counselling in Nigeria. It has been confirmed that networks, especially those offered in the online world, facilitate knowledge creation. An examination of the extent counsellor educators optimizes these opportunities, shows that these opportunities were grossly underutilized. This situation communicates threat to the development of the profession in Nigeria.
In view of this, it is suggested that mentorship from the senior colleagues who have international connections are very essential to the upcoming academics in the profession. A practice whereby counsellor educators with connections to international and local scholars of repute connect others to these scholars should be encouraged and pursued. The annual conferences organized by both the national and state chapters of the Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) may be viable opportunity for this.

The zeal to live up to international standard can be ignited and strengthened in Nigerian counsellor educators by a personal and conscientious search for avenues for collaborations that can be accessed from education/counselling networks found in the World Wide Web.

References


Assessing the Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-Educational Needs of Nursing Students at Millikin University

FOLAMI, Florence
flofolami@yahoo.com
School of Nursing, Millikin University
Decatur, IL, USA

&

ADEOYE, Blessing F.
Bless_adeoye@yahoo.com
Faculty of Education,
University of Lagos. Nigeria

Abstract
While the leading edge between nursing and information provides an opportunity to expand the limitations of nursing knowledge and practice and creates new leadership roles for nurses, it also requires special competencies for safe and effective nursing practice. This study, therefore, assesses informatics competencies and examines the pedagogic and practical need for ICT in nursing education at Millikin University. Quantitative study using a survey design was found appropriate for this study because it allows a larger sample to be pulled from the undergraduate nursing students at Millikin University School of Nursing. All undergraduate nursing students are eligible to participate in the study. Overall, students reported greatest competencies with respect to computer literacy, having positive attitudes toward ICT uses, able to assess ICT in an informed manner, effectively searching on-line information sources and understand the application of nursing workload data to clinical productivity management.

Keywords: Information and Communication Technology (ICT), informatics competencies, informatics, nursing knowledge, and nursing practice.
Introduction
There is a growing recognition of the need for nurses to be knowledgeable about the potential of information and communication technology (ICT) in order to support their work in clinical practice, research, and educational roles (Gassert, 2008). The fast development and expectations of health care in ICT practice settings requires nurses who have the essential informatics competencies to effectively meet their responsibilities and standards for nursing practice. ICT is necessary to support evidence-based learning and professional practice in nursing education. ICT is broadly referred to as set of activities that facilitate by electronic means that capture, store, process, transmit, and display of information (Dimick, 2010). ICT is an umbrella term that includes computer hardware and software; digital broadcast and telecommunications technologies as well as electronic information repositories such as the World Wide Web (Selwyn, 2002).

Nurses are expected to keep up to date with a growing body of health care information systems and technology to ensure that they are providing patients with the latest evidence-based information (Martz, Xhang, & Ozanich, 2007). Moreover, ICT has become part of the health care environment. The increasing availability of health information means that patients’ needs often extend beyond wanting information, but also to seeking help in the interpretation and clarification of information. Graduating nursing students should be well prepared to use technology in the technology-rich environments they are entering. Numerous nursing informatics programs have been established worldwide (Martz, Xhang, & Ozanich, 2007; Trimmer, Wiggins, & Beachboard, 2007). The challenge becomes exploring innovative tools that will equip nurses with the appropriate skills to utilize information technology, to improve health care quality and patients’ safety and redesign health care services. With this growth, an expectations has come the need to ensure that nurses have the necessary informatics competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes and decision making) to effectively meet their responsibilities and standards for nursing practice.
Problem Statement
Implementing ICT in nursing schools requires educators that are knowledgeable and ready to facilitate an effective learning experience (Axley, 2008). Axley further explained that teaching with technology is a learned skill that involves considerably more knowledge and skill than knowing how to use a computer. With the rapid expansion of electronic learning environments, the need to examine the pedagogic and practical need for ICT in nursing is critical. The challenges of keeping up with new ICT will remain to be a challenge in nursing education (Neuman, 2006). Hence developing dedication to explore and experiment with new electronic strategies is essential to the successful usage of ICT in nursing schools. ICT has become a pervasive part of the health care society (Wilson, 2006), therefore student nurses need to be competent in the use of ICT in order to navigate through confusing, complex information spaces and become owners of personal reference librarian.

There have been many studies that have focused exclusively on the importance of principals, teachers and students’ attitudes toward technology in other higher education but left out nursing program (Axley, 2008; Pickett, 2009; Wilson, 2006). However, less information is available regarding the informatics competencies among nursing students and faculty in nursing schools in United States; this study therefore assesses informatics competencies, and examines the pedagogic and practical need for ICT in nursing education at Millikin University.

Research Questions
This study will be guided by the following questions:

1. How does the school environment affect students nurses’ use of ICT?
2. What is the status of informatics competencies of nursing students at Millikin University?
3. What are the students nurses’ perceptions of informatics education in nursing program at the Millikin University?
Purpose of the Study
The ability to incorporate ICT in nursing education will increase quick and timely access to information (Jelesicwics, 2007). The purpose of this study is to assess informatics competencies and examine the pedagogic and practical need for ICT in nursing education at Millikin University.

Conceptual Framework
The technology acceptance model was used as the theoretical framework for the study. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is an information systems theory that models how users come to accept and use a technology (Chuttur, 2009). The model suggests that when users are presented with a new technology, a number of factors influence their decision about how and when they will use the technology. Scherer (2005) identified Perceived Usefulness (PU) as one of the factors and it is defined as the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance. Scherer also identified Perceived Ease-Of-Use (PEOU) as another factor and it is defined as the degree to which a person believes that, using a particular system would be free from effort. Because new technologies are complex and an element of uncertainty exists in the minds of decision makers with respect to the successful adoption of them, people form attitudes and intentions towards adoption of new technology, prior to initiating efforts directed at using it. Attitudes towards usage and intentions to use may be lacking.

Review of the literature
ICT may enhance nursing students’ learning and retention while providing connection with peers and faculty. Gassert (2008) described informatics competencies for four levels of nurses (beginning nurses, experienced nurses, informatics specialists and informatics innovators). He also presented three examples of health care information technologies that are used in acute care settings. He described the recent changes related to baccalaureate essentials documents to include informatics competencies in program outcomes. Gassert concluded that nursing educators need to embrace existing competencies and include activities that will prepare their graduates to use health care information technologies that will result in clinical transformation.
Hersh and Williamson (2007) looked at the barriers to achieving benefits of health information technology (HIT) on a larger scale. The goal of the American Medical Informatics Association is to educate 10,000 clinicians in MI by the year 2010. They claimed that despite numerous studies demonstrating the value of improving the quality, safety and efficiency of health care, there is an increasing need for a larger and better trained workforce in medical informatics.

Pickett (2009) assessed teacher technology skill levels and the impact that skill level has on technology integration in the classroom. The study used the Determining Educational Technology and Instructional Literacy Skill sets for the 21st questionnaire to determine teachers’ technology integration level. Students and teachers reported on the need for more technology equipment and technology knowledgeable teachers. The findings showed that there is a need for improved teacher technology skill levels. The improved technology skill will likely strengthen technology integration within classrooms and contribute to an empowered workforce.

McNeil, Elfrink, Pierce, Beyea, Bickford, and Averill (2005) performed an online survey of deans/directors of 266 baccalaureate and higher nursing programs in the U.S. and their findings have major implications for nursing faculty and program administrators who are planning continuing education opportunities and designing nursing curricula that prepare nurses for use of the electronic health record and professional practice. Approximately half of undergraduate nursing programs were teaching information literacy skills and required students to enter with word-processing and email skills. Almost 50% of those who participated in their study perceived faculty as novice and advanced beginners in teaching and using ICT applications.

Several recent systematic reviews have documented the benefits of ICT for improving health and clinical decision support (Hansen & Erdleey, 2007; Thor, 2007). Also, Hansen and Erdleey (2007) explained the impact of ICT on health care students’ education, social networking, and collaboration. Although, ICT phenomenon provides advanced utilization,
there are still barriers to ICT widespread adoption. One of those barriers is a well-defined and competent workforce for developing, evaluating, and implementing systems. He said that continued efforts must be made to characterize and understand the optimal organization and education of this workforce.

Huang (2007) resented the rapid emergence of programs in health informatics, medical informatics and biomedical informatics. He implies a need for core curricula in these diverse disciplines. The study investigated the recommended competencies for health and medical informatics, aiming to develop a framework for use in curricular development. Current health and medical programs around the world were analyzed to assess how these competencies are reflected in current curricula and to identify new competencies. Several preferred skills and knowledge sets were identified and 40 programs were analyzed. Diverse curricular designs were found in these programs. Knowledge or skills in interpersonal communications, social impact of IT on health, and data mining may represent important skills for future. The suggested framework and the data analyzed may be important for developing a competency-based modular curriculum.

**Methodology**

Quantitative study, using a survey design, was found appropriate for this study because it allows a larger sample to be pulled from the undergraduate nursing students at Millikin University School of Nursing. All undergraduate nursing students are eligible to participate in the study. Each undergraduate student completed one Undergraduate Education Opportunity Questionnaire. The questionnaire is organized according to infrastructure elements found to be important in the integration of ICT in undergraduate nursing education (Chuttur, 2009). To protect the rights of the researcher and participants within the study, the researcher obtained informed consent from the participants before they participated in the study.

**Instrument**

The instrument is a researcher-developed instrument. It includes items related to demographics, characteristics of the curriculum, curriculum objectives, and infrastructure
elements. The infrastructure elements focus on students’ access to ICT, organizational culture, connectedness, attitudes, and values. A panel of nursing staff, department heads, and faculty members in nursing provided a content assessment and feedback to determine clarity and validity of questions. The nursing staff, faculty, and the department heads utilized the research instruments and provided feedback for the researcher. They felt that the questionnaire was comprehensive and easy to complete.

Sample and Sampling Technique
The study covered the School of Under-graduate students that took clinical courses during the fall of 2010. Thus, all the students (117) that enrolled in the course were asked to participate. However, only 113 of them were available during data collection.

Data Collection
Potential participants are provided with instructions for completing the questionnaires in order to assure some control over consistency of survey completion among the participants and no names of individuals were collected. The research instrument was administered to the participants during their clinical laboratory exercise. The survey took about 20 minutes to complete.

Data Analyses and Findings

The demographic information of the participants

Table 1- School of Nursing Class Level (Under-graduate) Fall, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School of Nursing Class Level (Under-graduate)</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sophomores</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 shows School of Nursing Class Level (Under-graduate) students that took clinical courses during the fall of 2010. Out of the 117 students that took the course, only 113 (96.5%) participated in the study. Out of the 113 participants, 28.3% were sophomores, 44.3% were juniors, and 27.4% were seniors.

Research Question 1- How does the school environment affect student nurses’ use of ICT?

When this statement was presented, “students employed technology in the development of strategies for solving problems in the clinical/practice environment”, a total of fifty six percent of the participants agree with the statement, 23.9% were neutral, and 19% disagree. Also, when the statement, “students use existing health and nursing information systems to care for their patients” 50% of the participants agree, 24% were neutral, and 25% disagree.

Table 2. Access to ICT Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to ICT Tools</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School of nursing/campus computers (desktop/laptop)</td>
<td>75.2%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet - World Wide Web</td>
<td>79.6%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail address</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>12.34%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliographic or library reference databases such as MEDLINE and CINAHL</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research data bases</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating clinical institutions’ technological infrastructure</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical information systems</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library systems/clinical information resources</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scores of strongly agree and agree are combined to form a single score “agree” in the discussion below while the total scores of “strongly disagree” and “disagree” were combined to form disagree.
Various statements concerning access to ICT tools were presented to the participants. Seventy five percent of the participants indicated that they are able to access campus computers while about 0.9% could not access. Majority of the participants (99.1%) have access to the internet, and e-mail. With the use of the bibliographic or library reference databases such as MEDLINE and CINAH, about 75% utilize these tools and 14% indicated that they did not use it. Seventy five percent have access to research data bases, 64% have access to collaborative clinical institutions' technological infrastructure. Only clinical information systems has a lower accessibility rate of 50%, and 67% have access to the library systems/clinical information resources. Overall, the participants have no difficulties in accessing ICT tools.

Students have access to ICT. A desirable level of access is available in all departments. Specifically, there is greatest access to the campus computers, online communication tools and research tools.

Research Question 2 - What is the status of informatics competencies of nursing students at Millikin University?
Table 3. Competency Level of the Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer literacy (e.g. use of word processing, data bases, spread sheets, presentations, graphics, bibliographic retrieval, ICT).</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locating information using ICT, evaluating, and applying it to support evidence-based learning and professional practice</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using ICTs to manage aggregate nursing healthcare data and information, including the entry, retrieval and manipulation of data; interpretation and organization of data into information</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to assess, in an informed manner, the value of new, emerging technologies (e.g., telenursing/tele-health, clinical decision support systems, electronic global health conferencing, virtual education, health information networks)</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectively searching on-line information sources - including internet/intranet-based materials and bibliographic databases</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the application of nursing workload data to clinical productivity management</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a positive attitudes toward ICT uses that support lifelong learning, collaboration, personal pursuits, and productivity</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 provides a summary of the competencies of the participants. Statements that are relevant to individual competencies were presented to solicit participants’ opinions. The participants were presented the following statements to respond whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree: evaluating and applying ICT to support evidence-based learning and professional practice, using ICTs to manage aggregate nursing healthcare data and information, including the entry, retrieval and manipulation of data, and interpretation and organization of data into information. Also included in the statements is ability to
assess in an informed manner the value of new emerging technologies, searching on-line information sources, teaching with the support of computer based instructional materials, understanding the application of nursing workload data to clinical productivity management, and having a positive attitude toward ICT uses that support lifelong learning, collaboration, personal pursuits, and productivity.

Table 4 – Degree of Availability of ICT tools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information systems relevant to nursing in the healthcare/clinical setting</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs and electronic services from home (e.g., access to LAN)</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology department/centre/help desk to troubleshoot computer and system problems</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical connectivity between educational and clinical service settings - e.g., clinical assignment bookings, preceptor arrangements.</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When participants were asked of the degree of availability of ICT tools, majority of participants indicated that ICT tools are available to them.

Research Question 3 - What are the students’ nurses perceptions of informatics education in nursing program at the Millikin University?

Students’ perceptions were measured by presenting statements related to their attitudes and values of informatics education in nursing program. Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they agree with the statements in table 5.
Table 5 - Attitudes and values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICT competencies are absolutely necessary for entry-level practicing nurses.</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate nursing programs should focus on using ICT to teach students about ICT.</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web-based instruction and learning is the same quality as on-site instruction and learning for undergraduate students.</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using ICT is scary for me.</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable in my ability to incorporate ICT in my teaching.</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our faculty value the importance of ICT in nursing education</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attitudes of participants vary regarding the listed attributes below. Seventy percent agreed that ICT competencies are absolutely necessary for entry-level practicing nurses while about 28% were neutral about this statement and 4% disagree. When asked if undergraduate nursing programs should focus on using ICT to teach students about ICT, 78% of the participants agree, 14.6% were neutral while 7% disagree. Also, 39% of the participants agree that web-based instruction and learning is the same quality as on-site instruction and learning for undergraduate students, 31.9% were neutral, and 27% disagree. When asked if using ICT is scary for them, 22% of the participants agree, 31.9% are neutral, and 41% disagree. Thirty two percent felt comfortable in their ability to incorporate ICT in their teaching, 49.6% are neutral, and 17% disagree. Thirty two percent of the participants of the faculty value the importance of ICT in nursing education, 43.7% are neutral, while 23% did not value the importance of ICT in nursing education.
Conclusions

This study was conducted based on a growing recognition of the need for nurses to be knowledgeable about the potential of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to support their work in clinical practice, research and education roles. In this study, overall students recorded greatest competencies with respect to computer literacy, having positive attitudes towards ICT uses, able to assess in an informed manner, effectively searching online information sources and understanding the application of nursing workload data to clinical productivity management.

According to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Chuttur (2009) which suggests that when users are presented with a new technology, a number of factors influence their decision about how and when they will use the technology. This model is relevant to this study as accessibility, ease of use, encouragement from the faculty, and the learning environment contributed to the utilization of ICT by the nursing students at Millikin. Students need to be prepared with the use of ICT in learning and educators need to embrace existing ICT competencies and include activities that will prepare their graduates to use health care information technologies that will result in clinical transformation.

References


Partnering for Effective Educational Researching for Development

OUNKA, Adams O. U.
adamonuka@yahoo.com & ao.onuka@mail.ui.edu.ng
www.aoonuka.com
+234-803-356-4064
Institute Of Education
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

Abstract
That research is a veritable tool for rapid social and economic development is undoubtedly well known globally. That educational researching is fraught with multi-dimensional challenges cannot be over-stressed. That multi-disciplinary approach and public-private, public-public, private-private partnership in educational researching for better and more rapid developmental oriented research results can be taken as given. This paper, therefore, examined the role of partnering for effective educational-developmental oriented researching, highlighting its challenges, and how a collaborative or partnership in educational researching can assist in overcoming these challenges and thus facilitate rapid development of any economy in the world particular emphasis on the sub-region. The paper posits that collaboration in educational researching would engender effective, meaningful and applicable educational research findings that would lift up the quality of education in Nigeria with the concomitant social and economic development in and of Nigeria. It outlines some of the challenges as inadequate level of institutional collaboration and low level of public-private partnership with respect to educational researching, low level of motivation for educational research, low quality of educational researchers due to low level of their training. The paper concludes that collaboration (partnership) in needed in the areas of funding, designing/planning the research, adequate training, institutionalization of partnership in researching and a concerted to encourage educational inter-disciplinary researching as well as the creation of educational research niche and trans-border educational partnership to engender effective educational researching for rapid social and economic development of West African sub-region.

Key Words: Educational research, research partnership, challenges, trans-border research partnership, rapid development.
Introduction

Educational research could be considered as the bedrock of researching for social and economic development of any nation, as it is obvious that education is the most potent instrument of national and international development (Maiyaki, 2002; Uwadaei, 2002). This is so, because as Onuka (2004) puts it, development is done by the human for the sake of the human. Education is the main source of human capital development, thus all other sectors of the economy depend on the education sector to provide or groom for them, the relevant human capital to enable develop and therefore, aggregate national development. According to Kothari (2004), research has been defined as a “systematized effort to gain new knowledge”. This definition implies that undertaking a research is a joint effort of a number of people, for such undertaking to be fruitfully successful and in turn contribute meaningfully to national development.

Furthermore, social research, under which educational research falls, is seen by Amin (2005) as a ‘critical and exhaustive investigation or experimentation …’ He asserts that ‘research is slow and laborious process of laying bare, facts and truths…’. The inference to be drawn from this assertion is that social or any other type of research cannot be single-handedly carried out any meaningful for result-oriented research outcome. By definition and practice, researching involves several persons. Even academic research such as doctoral theses involves several persons: The main researcher-the candidate, the supervisor, the subjects from whom s/he collects data or on whom s/he carries his/her experiments, research assistants and the data manager/analyst are all part of the exercise, though without all of them being recognized formally as critical elements in the researching effort. Yet without the contribution of each of these elements and more, nothing meaningful would be achieved as such efforts become exercises in futility. This development reveals that researching needs to take cognizance of this obvious fact and in a way evolve partnership in educational researching. For instance, Onuka & Onabamiro (2010) found that educational evaluation and researching are fraught with some challenges including management, ethical, funding and cooperative challenges. The invariability of this is that efforts must be geared towards
making researching a partnership venture. In fact Gay & Airasian (2000) believed that the multi-dimensional nature of any research undertaking calls for thorough research planning where the competence of the individuals involved in it must be taken into consideration. They further state the need for brainstorming before planning to effective educational researching.

Furthermore, it is their opinion that research plan should give cognizance of ethics as one of its major components. Therefore, the contribution of research to human and national development presupposes that any such exercise should be taken seriously and its evolution should and must be thorough. Obviously any research evolution and executing must involve relevant stakeholders to make it meaningful in content and execution if it were to produce relevant and utilizable outcome. The implication is that an effective educational researching must, of a necessity, produce usable or applicable output to solving not only education-related problems but also national problems in all its ramifications. Some educational institutions in Africa among them, the University of Ibadan, Nigeria and the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya placed much premium on research that they respectively set Research Management Office and Department of Research to harness research efforts in their respective institutions, in order to address the challenges confronting institutional and individual research undertakings. These developments are geared to making research outputs from their institutions meaningful and utilizable in their respective economies. In the light of this, it becomes imperative to discuss the challenges of research as it relates to the education in particular and proffer some ways of overcoming to research undertakings and making research outputs fruitful and useful to the economy.

**Challenges of Educational Research**

Onuka & Onabamiro (2010) identified the following major challenges confronting educational research in Nigeria: ethical, utilisation, management and monitoring/general challenges of conducting evaluation and research in Nigeria, while Onuka (2011) addressed the challenge of funding research and suggested collaborative funding of research for rapid development. It is also true that insufficient knowledge and understanding of, and skills in
undertaking research constitute a major hindrance to effectively undertaking research in our clime. This is because experience has revealed that the quality of some research articles presented by a number of some educational researchers at some national conferences is usually deficient in one aspect or the other. Sambo (2005) posited that educational research is fraught with the problems or challenges of survey, which according to him occur at every stage of the survey process. This, he further opines could be overcome through careful planning. According to him, there are also the problems/challenges of sampling, suggesting that sampling problem can lead to imprecise finding while postulating that the way out of this problem would be increasing sample size or stratifying the population to make it more representative of the population and the challenges of non-response as well as that of measurement. Bamiro & Adedeji (2010) also agreed that funding for research in Nigeria is a far cry from what is needed as research funding in the country is principally provided by outside donor agencies. Okeke (2002) stated that Conference of Heads of Research and Development (R & D) in both public and private enterprises in Nigeria observed that there is insufficient level of awareness of the relevance of research to development of the nation, management of research was yet to attained its desired height, there is absence of national policy on research in Nigeria, scarcity of data base on which to built research on, lack of appropriate research funding framework, lack of legal and institutional framework to protect research outputs among other things. These are in tandem with the observations made by Onuka & Onabamiro (2010), and Sambo (2005) that low premium is placed on research in the country.

Challenges in researching are not just a Nigerian or West African phenomenon, but global or at least a third world problem. Kothari (2004) listed the problems of research in India as including the following: lack of scientific training in research methodology, which according to him constitute a great impediment to research; insufficient level of interaction be the research community and the prospective consumer of research output; lack of confidence by the business community in the integrity of the research institutions’ honesty in utilizing research equipment/fund, it supplies; lack of adequate information on researches conducted,
thereby resulting in overlapping; non-existence of research code of conduct; inter-university and inter-departmental/faculty rivalries; insufficient level of secretarial assistance and lack of timely available published data from government and other agencies among others. Therefore, it can be summarized that the major challenges of educational evaluation and research in Nigeria are as follows:

Ethical challenge;
Management challenge;
Funding challenge;
Utilisation challenge;
Mentoring/general challenge;
Skills challenge;

The ethical challenge suggests that substantial number of educational researchers and most researchers in our clime that is, West Africa do not understand or are totally ignorant of the issues of ethics in research and thus often sideline the issue of ethics in research. This trend presupposes that the issue of integrity is neglected and could jeopardize the outcome of research as stakeholders do not consider researchers as sincere in adhering to ethics of research especially when it is commissioned by some bodies/agency (Onabamiro & Onuka, 2010). Resnik (undated) posits that ethics is the adherence to the norms in conducting research so as to promote the integrity of the research and the researcher. He listed ethical issues in research as honesty, objectivity, confidentiality, integrity, carefulness, respect for intellectual property, responsible publication, respect for colleagues, social responsibility, non-discrimination, competence and legality. Whereas Barrow in reviewing the contribution of research to global development suggests that the role of research in development is of primary importance to any nation in need of development.

One major problem regarding ethical issues in researching is that of not including teaching of research ethics in curriculum of research methods as the issue of ethics is often glossed over and as such young researchers are hardly schooled on research ethics, hence young researchers make the mistake of ignorantly glossing over the issue of proper referencing or
the illegality of publishing the same articles in two different journals without disclosing it to the editors or publishing a commissioned work without the authorization of the funder among others. It is ethically wrong for one to include the name of a person on a paper to which he did not make substantial contribution, yet a young researcher ignorant of this could do it as an act of benevolence.

It is only through partnership that the issue of ethics can be properly addressed e.g. through mentoring of a junior colleague by a senior colleague. The seriousness of ethical issues in research is so important that the University of Ibadan, Nigeria had evolved research-related ethics policy for its academic and non-academic staff engaged in research (University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria Ethics Policy, 2010; UI Research Policy and RMO, 2011).

The issue of research management: This presupposes that many an educational researcher in Nigeria and on the sub-region of West Africa, lacks the research management acumen to effectively manage research, due to poor research planning and execution (Onuka & Onabamiro, 2010). Knowing full that the art and science of management is a joint effort, solo researching is bound to be hindered by poor management except the researcher[s] consult with others to ameliorate the situation to engender proper research planning, budgeting, organisation, executing and evaluating all research activities at every stage to engender proper educational researching (Onuka & Onabamiro, 2010). It is the realization of this challenge that the University of Ibadan, Nigeria (UI) and the Catholic University of East Africa, Nairobi, Kenya (CUEA) respectively established Research Management Office (RMO) and Department of Research to address the challenge [UI Research Policy and RMO, 2011; CUEA, 2010].

The Funding challenge: This challenge portends that if research is carried out without adequate funding, there would not, therefore, be effective educational researching and as it would be done haphazardly and thus producing haphazard researching and findings which cannot be trusted and relied upon as its product may not reflect the position a well funded research could have revealed (Onuka, 2011). Ashby (2003) implicitly posited that when there
is research funding challenge, research findings are likely to be less reliable as properly funded research are more likely to promote effective researching [whether or not it is educational or otherwise]. The importance of research management including funding has been recognized and given prominence by the University of Ibadan, by establishing a Research Management Office [RMO] for the purpose of managing/coordinating research undertakings in the university (Research Policy and Research Management Office, 2011).

The Utilisation challenge: the challenge of research output utilisation portends that the findings are either not disseminated or are not trusted by the ultimate consumer because they were not taking into account or carried along during the planning and implementation process of the research. Onuka & Onabamiro (2010) found that most research output/findings are hardly utilized in Nigeria because they are seldom well-disseminated or because the relevant stakeholders were not in any way involved in the entire process. They believe that until research outputs are properly marketed by effectively communicating the findings, they will always end up in the waste bin and thereby remaining a challenge.

The Mentoring challenge: The mentoring problem has become endemic in the developing that the University of Ibadan had to organize training programmes through its Directorate of Quality Assurance (DQA) in 2011, while the Catholic University of Eastern Africa [CUEA, 2010] stresses the essence of research mentoring in its programmes. The University of Ibadan Post Graduate School (PGS) had in like manner organized and published some proceedings of such mentoring training programmes like the PGS’ manual in 2004 and 2006 respectively. These actions indicate high level deficit in research and academic mentoring in the sub-region.

The Skills challenge: Udo & Ekpo (2004) and Sambo (2004) suggested that the challenge of skills in educational research is enormous such that many an educational researcher is deficient in research skills, such as in survey, instrumentation, sampling, data analysis and research report writing. This ugly development is due to the fact that research though multi-disciplinary endeavour, yet many a researcher often go solo thereby throwing up the weakness of researching in this clime because consultation with relevant stakeholders are not
done before researches are undertaking. This research skills challenge throws up such things as improperly constructed instruments, samples that are not appropriately chosen, incorrect analysis of data and even incorrectly written research report. These must be faced and squarely addressed to move educational researching forward in Nigeria and in the sub-region.

**Overcoming the Challenges of Educational Research**

Challenges which are often inhibitions to advancement or impediment to accomplishing set objectives can be overcome if properly identified and adequately addressed. Thus, research challenges can be overcome if deliberate efforts are made to identify them and squarely deal with them in order to make any educational or other forms of research to meaningfully contribute to national development. In the light of the foregoing, having decipher the problems or challenges confronting educational researching in Nigeria, there is no gainsaying the fact that they can be confronted frontally for effective educational researching for national development.

*The Ethical challenge:* ethical challenge bothers on research fraud, dishonesty, ignorance of terms of research undertakings and reporting among others. This challenge can be addressed by having national research policy and by defining the terms of references in contractual research undertaking and in self-sponsored research undertakings and reporting. For contractual research there is the need for the sponsoring body or individuals sponsoring researches to clearly define the terms of reference [TOR] and for the researcher to agree with these terms in which the two parties then sign an agreement. Gay & Airasian (2000) opined that the issue of ethics in research cannot be ignored as it is an important component of research undertakings. To them, it is an issue to brainstorm and agree on the requisite research ethics before evolving the research plan. Proper and continuous research training and orientation would definitely contribute in no small measure to solving the problem of research ethics in the sub-region (Kothari, 2004; Onuka & Onabamiro, 2010). University of Ibadan, Nigeria has already taken the bold step in setting up a Research Management Office
with a Research Ethics and Integrity Unit to ensure that ethics in research are unambiguously adhered to and this development is hereby recommended to others to emulate.

The Management challenge: as stated earlier revealed in this in study, the issue of research management has come to be taken seriously to be formidable by stakeholders in research, such that some universities across borders have come to term with management of research and research output that they have offices/outfits to manage research in their respective universities, for instance, the Catholic University of East Africa, Nairobi, Kenya [2000], the University of Ibadan, Nigeria [2009] and the University of St. Andrew’s School of Management established the Research Unit for Research Utilisation {RURU} to collaborate with others to manage research [RURU, 2001].

It needs hardly emphasized, therefore, that the need had arisen for setting up National and Sub-regional research outfits, not just an association that can actually manage research, if the challenge of research management were to be confronted headlong. Continuous training and indeed mentoring in research management is a way out of this problem.

The Funding challenge: this is a big challenge confronting not only research undertakings, but also almost every facet of national and even global economy (Onuka, 2011). This observation is in tandem with the finding of Bamiro & Adedeji (2010) that researches in Nigeria are principally sponsored by funding agencies from outside of the country. Thus, for research to be properly conceived and executed, Nigerians and other West Africans, whether individuals, non-governmental and governmental organisations, must rise up and begin to fund researches in order to facilitate research for rapid development of the sub-region. This development is the only way by which rapid development, direly needed by the sub-region, can be realized within a short period of time. If the government promulgates legislation establishing educational research fund with substantial contributions by the corporate world and properly administered by a body of eminent people with proven integrity, this will likely address this challenge headlong. Individuals who on their own contribute substantially to
funding research should be honoured to encourage them and others to do more in that direction so that, research activities can be on-going.

*The Utilisation challenge:* the establishment of Educational Research Output Bank would eliminate lack of information on educational research output and thus also the duplication of research efforts by making available research output data to the general public through various means of disseminating research findings e.g. publications, workshops, seminars/fairs etc, among others (Onuka and Onabamiro, 2010). This suggestion would eliminate what Kothari (2004) refers to as duplication and non-availability of research data and by extension, lack of utilisation of research output.

*The Mentoring challenge:* from the various problems of undertaking (educational) research projects highlighted above, it is clear that the need for conscious and deliberate efforts to mentor upcoming young researchers cannot be ignored. In this wise, universities which are the main sources of continued researching in most countries of the sub-region, should rise to the task. It is in recognition of this that the University of Ibadan, Nigeria had begun organizing mentoring training for all categories of its senior staff and post graduate students through its Centre for Sustainable Development [CESDEV] in 2011 (CESDEV, 2011).

*The Skills challenge:* In recognition of the need for researcher capacity building, the University of Ibadan, Nigeria states in Research Policy and Research Management Office Document published in 2011 that it will ‘constantly build research capacity among staff and students through training in grantsmanship, research methodology, ethical practice and research management’, p. 4. This is a bold step that must be commended and recommended to other researching institutions in the sub-region to adapt to their individual circumstances. Constant training for and mentoring of junior researchers by senior ones will upgrade educational research in this clime, which will ameliorate what Kothari (2004) called dearth of trained and thus skilled (educational) researchers in India as in Nigeria (Onuka &Onabamiro, 2010).
Role of Educational Research in National Development

It has been acknowledged by the government of the Nigerian federation that education is a veritable instrument of human and national development (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN], 2004). Onuka (2004) asserted that development is done by human for the sake of human. Thus, if education is a relevant vehicle for national development, it is no less one for human development, because development of any nation is undertaken by its human capital whether owned or borrowed. Yet, education delivery needs to improve continuously and consistently, if it were to play the role assigned to it by the society to develop human capital for national or societal development. Barrow (2002), Maiyaki (2002) and Okeke (2002) among others agreed that the role of (educational) research can only be ignored at the peril of stagnation in development of a nation.

The important role of educational research has for long been recognized in Nigeria when as far back as 1983, Dayal contributing to book published by the Centre for Management asserts that research effectively promotes management education in the world. Educational research had given rise to positive developments in curriculum, instructional techniques and aids as well as educational management and innovative teaching (Adetayo & Onuka, 2011). A good and relevant curriculum resulting from educational research creates greater opportunity for the acquisition of relevant skills for national development of an economy and also the concomitant human development. Aluko (1983) asserted that research can engender national development because it promotes acquisition of skills which in turn are used to promote national economic development. Obeamata (1999) observed that research and evaluation contributes to educational development and so it implies to national development as education is a major vehicle for national development and actually contributes to every facet of a national economy. It is very obvious from the foregoing that there cannot be meaningful development in the corporate world and in a nation without effective (educational) researching, hence many a corporate entity usually have Research and Development Unit as implied by (Udo, & Ekpo, 2004). In summary, therefore, (educational) research is a vehicle for development in every facet of an economy, because it is connected to every area of...
human endeavour, hence the terms: engineering education, medical education, legal education, management education and economics education among others.

**Partnering for Effective Educational Researching**

The foregoing suggests that educational and indeed all of forms of research are multi-disciplinary and the UI Research Policy and Research Management Office Document (2011) states that it is equally trans-disciplinary. This being the case, it becomes invariable that educational research cutting across all disciplines requires partnering for effective researching through synergy that will culminate in rapid national development that has become so desirable in our clime. The manifest implication of the challenges to (educational) research enumerated above is that the only approach to effective, is the multi-disciplinary, trans-disciplinary and collaboration between the researching community and the research product consuming community strategy. It also portends that the various stakeholders should individually create for itself a niche in the research industry, so as to bring something tangible and profitable to the synergistic research enterprise at all points in time. Okonta (2002) and Prasad (2002) stress the need for partnering to achieve effective researching in Nigeria.

It is pertinent to note that partnering in effective educational researching entails that those who have carved niches for themselves in the various aspects of research: theoretical aspect, literature reviewing, methodology including data collection, which no one person can reasonably and effectively collect in a good time except by joint efforts. If research concerns a global development of the education sector of the economy, there would be the need for inter-disciplinary collaboration by the researchers in the various segments of the sector. According to Onuka (2011), a comprehensive or in-depth educational research undertaking can be effective only if it is collaborative rather than solo. This is because there is the need for funding which most (educational) researchers cannot afford. Thus, partnering with funders will the surer way to effectively and indeed efficiently making research outputs to be profitable to the intended consumers of its output. Even, if a solo research effort produces a
formidable output, the need will arise to market such product, but the researcher may not a
good marketer of his research product unless he wants stop being productive in terms of
researching and even then, the researcher may not possess the wherewithal to embark on
marketing the research product. He, therefore, needs to partner with a sponsor of
workshops/seminar and conferences to market the product through publications and
interactive sessions. Partnership in researching entails that understanding solo researching is
virtually impossible because the researcher cannot manufacture the data required, so he
partners with the school/education system, with the teachers, students, managers, the
community, research assistants to facilitate relevant data collection.

There should be partnership between the researcher and secretarial personnel as may be
required, partnering with analyst even when is one, makes the research more robust and more
productive as its outcome may be better trusted than if it were produced by solo effort. As the
researcher is not necessarily an expert in every facet of the enterprise, he would require the
collaboration of other researchers to train his assistant in a particular research endeavour. In
fact, this is the implication of the intention of the UI Research Policy and Research
Management Office document, it intend to build capacity in research through multi-and
trans-disciplinary approach. Research uses the total quality management approach is most
likely to produce consumable outcome and the consumers were taken into consideration in
the conception of the research having made input into it. Thus, multifaceted nature of
(educational) and other forms of Research imply multi-dimensional and multi-talented
approach for effective research, which can only be achieved through partnership by
stakeholders from the conception of educational research to the consumption of its output
and the feedback therefrom.

**Conclusion**

The main thrust or import of this discourse is that effective educational researching calls for
deliberately planned partnership in research undertakings. It becomes clear from the
foregoing discourse that educational research undertaking solo yields only a little benefit if
any, as it will be deficient in both content and output. This is so because good research plan content emanates from brainstorming with stakeholders: quasi-representative subjects to be used in the study, the would-be beneficiaries of the product of the research, the society and the users of the research outcome. Their contribution to the content of the research undertaking will give effective direction to the research, it will engender their readiness to utilize the research output as they are already aware of it and are part of the process and in some cases will enable them to contribute to its funding and where it was initiated by funders, they become aware of the process and be willing partners at every point in time in the life of the project. The multi-disciplinary nature of research in education calls for educational researchers partnering with statisticians and computer scientists for synergy and effective educational researching because each of the partners has his/her niche which he would properly utilized for effectiveness of the research endeavour and each will then become more dexterous in that which he/she specializes in.

This work, therefore recommends:

- That partnering for effective educational researching should always be among the researcher[s], the research assistants, funders if any, prospective consumers of the expected output of the research and other interested parties such education managers, communities, etc.
- That a research output data bank should be established for the purpose of collecting research results and disseminate them to would be users as and when required, to ensure that research findings are appropriately utilized for rapid national development.
- That Education Research Bureau should be established to develop educational research policy and regulate the undertaking of educational research in Nigeria.
- That Educational Research and Development Fair be held annually by universities and educational research institutes not only within the borders of Nigeria, but among the countries of the West African sub-region.
References


Appendix

Abbreviation

CESDEV: University of Ibadan, Centre for Sustainable Development

CMD: Centre for Management Development, Lagos, Nigeria

CUEA: The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

FRN: Federal Republic of Nigeria

R & D: Research and Development

RMO: Research Management Office, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

RURU: Research Unit for Research Utilisation

TOR: Terms of Reference

UI: University of Ibadan, Nigeria
Education for Sustainable Development: A Framework for Nigeria

ONI, Adesoji A.

auluoni@yahoo.com

Department of Educational Foundations

University of Lagos, Akoka-Yaba, Lagos.

&

ADETORO, J.A.

Department of Educational Administration

University of Lagos, Akoka-Yaba, Lagos,

Abstract
This paper proposed a framework for conceptualizing, planning for and implementing an education agenda for sustainable development within the Nigerian context. The strategic questions informing this framework are: What is the context within which sustainable development is being proposed? What are the educational needs that arise within the given context? And what mechanism would best facilitate these needs by satisfying the sustainable development objectives? The central thesis of the paper is that; sustainable development ultimately depends on enhancing people’s capacities as individuals and groups to improve their own lives and to take greater control over their own destinies. Thus, education is contended to be a critical tool for achieving sustainable development. The educational implications of sustainable development within the Nigerian context are therefore assessed using the National Policy on Education as the agenda for sustainable development, while the paper ultimately proposed the Learning City that operates on a tripod of participation, partnership and performance as a framework in ensuring education for sustainable development.

Key Words: Sustainable, development, education, Nigeria

Introduction

Nigeria was one of the countries that signed the Agenda 21 agreement at the 1992 Earth summit in Rio de Janeiro. The agreement called for a global partnership for sustainable
development. Through this agreement, Nigeria like many other countries committed itself to promote sustainability through a great variety of activities. But, as with many other African countries, Nigeria was forced to undertake painful structural reforms to stabilize her economy greatly impacting in a negative manner on its agenda for sustainable development.

Structural adjustment has been most traumatic for Nigeria, due to the impact it has on the masses. The government has divested many of the public operations e.g. electricity, transportation. The cost of accessing health care and a good education has risen. Many Government agencies are now Executive Agencies meaning among other things, that they must sustain themselves. These government agencies particularly educational institutions that got their yearly budget from the central budget no longer enjoy full benefit. Rather, they must begin to develop new strategies to provide internally generated revenue to sustain their operation. This often means an increase or introduction of user fees for many social services. In the meantime, the private sector struggles with liquidity and there are numerous accounts of businesses collapsing, others strategically choosing to scale back operations through restructuring, downsizing, layoffs and redundancies, leaving many without employment.

The results of the structural adjustment programme are clear; they include; high unemployment and reduced the standard of living for many, the exacerbation of poverty and inequality, a net outflow of wealth from the country, social unrest, increased incidents of crime and violence to name a few. The adverse macroeconomic environment and the attendant policies adopted to overcome the economic problems facing the country have put pressure on the taxpayers’ ability to foot the bill for the delivery of various social services including education and health (Garity & Picard, 1996; The Commonwealth Foundation and Association of Development Agencies, 1999).

Within this context, the United Nations Development Programme, (2000) identified a number of issues related to vulnerability and human insecurity in Nigeria. These issues include: poverty evidenced by dilapidated house, no sanitary convenience, inability to care for children, hunger, no job or steady income; violence and crime severely affecting
community spirit and social relations due to fear, distrust, interpersonal conflicts, destruction of community infrastructure and political tribalism; inadequate housing/shelter, land tenure and social amenities impacted by low income of households resulting in the absence of protection, access to services and amenities, privacy, access to jobs, income, recreation and socialization; inadequate food, nutrition and health, resulting in low weight for age, anaemia among young children, and pregnant and lactating women, nutrition related chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiac diseases and stroke; environmental threats mainly related to water and air quality, the impact of improper waste disposal and the impact of natural disasters and environmental accidents.

The report of United Nations Development Programme, (2000) equally stated that “the factors outlined impoverish the lives and directly or indirectly threaten the economic, physical, and emotional/psychological well being of a large number of persons in Nigeria.” In other words, for those Nigerians their own sustainability is under threat and so despite a context of structural reform the government must intervene to steer development towards sustainability for all. Thus, any programme of sustainable development must address those social, economic and environmental issues present in our local context and most especially education because of the fact that education is the engine room of development. That is why education has been universally described as indispensable tool for socio-economic revolution and transformation.

The United Nations Development Programme (2000) identified education, health, nutrition, environment, employment, political and economic freedom as five energisers of economic resources development (Hallak, 1990). Although, these energisers are interdependent, education is the anchor for all others, for it guarantees good health and nutrition, ensures qualitative environment, builds, expands and refines the labour force as well as increase social, political and economic growth. Nigeria has continued to recognise education as a powerful force for both personal and national development, and has since identified education as “instrument per excellence for effecting national development“(FGN, 2004: 4). The foregoing indicates that development is in the heart of Nigeria government.
Thus, development can be seen as concerned with the transformation of the individuals, households, communities, private as well as public institutions through human beings, who will in turn ensure that available resources are properly managed and directed towards societal improvement. According to Stiglitz (1998):

*Development represents a transformation of society, a movement from traditional relations, traditional ways of thinking, traditional ways of dealing with health and education, traditional methods of production, to more “modern” ways......The changes that are associated with development provides individuals and societies with some control over their own destiny... enriches the lives of individuals...*

Nigeria’s first National Development Plan covering the post independence period of 1962 to 1968 laid sufficient emphasis on education. Infact, in the words of Anowor (1995), education has always featured prominently in Nigeria’s development planning. Even Obasanjo administration in his presentation of the 2004 budget, gave education and health sectors the highest allocation and observed that “this is to send sharp signal that these two sectors are fundamental to future growth, wealth creation, poverty reduction and enhanced living standard and attainment of Millennium Development Goal (MDG). The fact that these two sectors are important in development is not contestable. However, it could be argued that education is a more crucial factor because healthful living may not guarantee an educated populace, while education will produce healthy people. The centrality of education in the development of nations was again echoed by President Obasanjo (Ezekwesili, 2006) when he said that:

*Education is for national development
Without a proper educational sector, there is no possibility of attaining our MDG and EFA Goals or fats tracking NEEDS. P: 5*
Buttressing this view, Ezekwesili (2006), highlighted the place of education in national development as:

_Nigeria’s development will not be saved by oil and gas or solid minerals, but rather by the application of the benefit stream arising from resource exploitation in the development of human capital. Education is central to the accomplishment of the above. Examples of countries that have succeeded in this approach include, China, India, South Korea and Singapore._

Therefore, education is one sector of any nation’s economy that cannot be toyed with and that requires the collective inputs of all sections of the society. No wonder the Federal Government of Nigeria has never relented efforts in planning and formulating laws that control the entire provision of education for the citizenry. This is to ensure uniformity of standards and qualitative education for all. This paper therefore develops a framework for education as model for sustainable development. In other words, the paper outlines the role of education in fostering sustainable development, examines the sustainable development needs within the Nigerian context and then outlines a framework for sustainable development education premised on the notions of inclusion and participation otherwise known as learning city.

**Objective**

The specific objective of this paper is to develop a framework for conceptualising, planning and implementing an education agenda for sustainable development within Nigeria. In achieving this, the paper addresses the following:

1. Appraisal of the historical background of the framework
2. Assess the sociological perspective of sustainable development
3. Examine by way of definitions, the concept of sustainable development
4. Discuss the role of education in sustainable development in Nigeria and;
5. Review the concept of Learning City Model and how it operates on a tripod of participation, partnership and performance in ensuring education for sustainable development.

**Sociological Perspective of Sustainable Development**

In many ways, sociology is ideally suited as a means of teaching students the concept of 'sustainable development.' Sociology emerged during the 19th and early 20th centuries as a response to massive social upheavals that began in Western Europe centuries ago and that have since become the characteristic features of modern society. Karl Marx examined how the development of capitalism enforced the brutal subordination of all social relationships to the cash nexus, which led to such 'unsustainable' conditions as alienated labour, social inequality, and ecological destruction. (Marshal, 1996). Max Weber's critique of the 'iron cage' of bureaucracy pointed out that while modern society was impossible without the thorough rationalization of all social institutions, such rationalization inevitably resulted in a dehumanized world in which all moral or social responsibilities are constrained by the goal of efficiency, (Brown, 2006). Durkheim argued that traditional forms of a community, characterized by what he called a strong 'collective conscience,' have largely given way to more fragmented moral systems that emphasize individual rights at the expense of collective responsibilities, thereby making social disintegration more likely, (Brown, 2006).

While the specific events that stimulated the rise of sociology have receded into the past, the problems that sociology was designed to answer are still the defining problems of contemporary society.

In addition, from its origin, a fundamental component of sociology has been a commitment to progress. While this commitment has taken many forms, such as Marx's revolutionary praxis and Durkheim's conservative program of moral education, thus, sociology is a science that not only sees development as a defining feature of modern society, but also sees as its goal, the creation of solutions to the problems it uncovers. Mills (1959) wrote that sociology should help people see the personal troubles in their daily lives as public
issues; rather than experiencing unemployment, poor housing conditions, boring work, and other vices as purely individual failures, Mills saw the job of the sociologist to help people see how these personal troubles are the result of the historical period and the social institutions in which they live. Once this 'sociological imagination' has been cultivated, there can emerge active 'publics' capable of changing history and social structure to produce a more liberating, fulfilling life. This dialectic of biography, history, and structure is particularly relevant of education for sustainable development (Brown, 2004). It simultaneously asks us to see the social forces constructing the types of problems people face and the possible solutions available to them, and the central role that people play in creating and shaping their world.

Sociology would thus appear to be a very sympathetic setting from which to convey the ecological, social, economic and most especially the educational goals of sustainable development. Indeed, one could argue that 'sustainability' is the very core of sociology in both its substance and its methodology.

**Defining Sustainable Development**

In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), otherwise known as the Brundtland Commission posited the following definition of sustainable development, “economic and social development that meets the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Dalal-Clayton and Bass, 2000: 9).

Dalal-Clayton and Bass (2000) interpreted Bruntland definition, which highlights the triple dimensions of sustainable development thereby delineating the elements that must be addressed in setting a sustainable development agenda. “Meeting the needs of the present,” this they argued means satisfying: economic needs - including an adequate livelihood or productive economic activity; also economic security when unemployed, ill, disabled or otherwise unable to secure a livelihood; social, cultural and health needs - including a shelter
which is healthy, safe, affordable and secure, with provision for piped water, drainage, transport, health care, education and child development and protection from environmental hazards; political needs - including freedom to participate in national and local politics and in decisions regarding management and development of one's home and neighbourhood within a broader framework which ensures respect for civil and political rights and the implementation of environmental legislation. Sustainable development connotes the ability to keep going and keep up the progress made in various segments of the society. In the worlds of Brundtland Commission (World Bank, 2003), development is sustainable if it “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” To Suoubbpta (2004), for development to continue indefinitely, it should balance the interest of different groups of people, within the same generation and among generations, and do so simultaneously in the economic, social and environmental dimensions of life.

The “Social Economic and Environment (see) model “ according to Babalola (2009) depicting the consonance among the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of development, shows some specific areas of human life that must be taken into consideration for development to be sustainable. Thus, sustainable development is not only concerned with economic growth, but also with equitable distribution of the national wealth through provision of employment, security, education and health. It also involves the provision of an environment that is conducive for productive life, rational use of renewable resources, conservation of the non-renewable ones, fair and free participation as well as the recognition that the prosperity of individual persons is in the wealth of the nation.

From the above, for development to be sustainable, a country needs to meet the following requirements:

1. The economy base on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) must continue to grow at an annual rate of at least 4% for at least 10 years at a stretch (World Bank, 2008)
2. There must be a balance of interest in at least, three areas viz:
a. Present versus future needs of the people (Babalola, 2009)
b. Economic, social and environmental objectives (Soubbptona, 2004).
c. Needs of individual, family, community (local and international),
   public and private sectors (Stiglitz, 1998).

3. There must be a move towards service-led economy with emphasis on
   transparency, accountability and social skills (World Bank, 2008)
4. The economy must be knowledge driven with emphasis on Information
   Communication Technology (ICT), intellectualism and innovation.(Babalola,
   2009)

With the foregoing discussion, we could see that sustainable development is even now a
recurring theme in ongoing discussions in Nigerian education. This made Nwobi (2008) to
described sustainable development as long-lasting improvement that focuses on continuous
improvement of systems, resources and information that are central to national development.
The one indisputable fact that characterizes sustainable development is that continuous
improvement is inevitable (Jenkins, 2006). Education and training play a fundamental role
when we aim at changing the actions of humankind in a more sustainable direction. Thus, it
is the role of education to ensure that citizens of all ages have the knowledge, skills,
readiness and vision that will enable them to build a sustainable and equitable future and
commit to a sustainable way of life. Therefore, it should be a major concern of management
in any educational institution to ensure that their staffs are well positioned for suitable
education (Aghenta 2002; Hogan & Shelton, 2007).

The foregoing discussion shows that “sustainable development” promotes a development
approach that is holistic in nature and rejects a survivalist tendency.

**The Role of Education in Sustainable Development**

Schreuder (2002) argued that education is the “greatest resource for achieving a just
society”. They further identifies promoting education, public awareness and training as part
of the sustainable development agenda demonstrating an agreement that education was critical for promoting sustainable development and increasing the capacity of the people to address environmental and developmental issues.

The importance of education to the sustainability process was reiterated in the discussion paper for the Thessalonikki Conference on Environment and Society: Education and Public Awareness for Sustainability (2005) when it stated that: “…education is the most effective means that society possess for confronting the challenges of the future… it is not the whole answer to every problem but education, in its broadest sense, must be a vital part of all efforts to imagine and create new relations among people and to foster greater respect for the needs of the environment” (Tilbury et al, 2002).

One's experiences during learning process and the impact of that learning on society have a direct correlation with the underlining belief that defines the education programme experienced. Educational planners and developers have held varying views regarding what end education should serve. The important question is “what is the educational goal that would facilitate a process of sustainable development?” From a sustainable development perspective, educators must articulate a vision in which “social development, ecological well being, and economic prosperity are addressed and which is founded on an ethic in which the common good or social justice underpins a respect for all learners” (Stevenson 2002:187).

In this regard, Shaeffer (1994: 7), offered three points that are useful in helping to outline the educational goals that would facilitate a process of sustainable development thus:

1. to encourage a more integrated view of how the world operates and how development does (or does not) occur;
2. make students more critically aware of how their actions, individually and collectively will hinder or help the world to meet future challenges;
3. help to mobilize and empower people with the knowledge and skills to participate more actively, more democratically and more collectively in the development process.

Buttressing this view, Akinboye (2003) argued that sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their needs, then, education must be seen as one of the tools for sustainable development. Sustainable development to him implies equipping learners with skills, attitudes and knowledge, with which they are employable. It is being empowered to be effective citizens, that is, being useful to themselves, their families, communities, states and the nation. Similarly, Okeke (2000) posited that the relationship between education and sustainable development is so intimate that one cannot be dispensed from the other. Education is central to sustainability. It is the instrument of social change, re-construction, and rehabilitation and cannot be taken for granted in the developmental scheme of any nation. The argument here is that education has always been the bedrock of any development. By being educated; people are equipped with knowledge and skills to improve themselves and others in the community. The populace is also skilled to be able to meet the challenges of global change. That is why the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) takes cognizance of this fact when it states that education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plan because it is the most important instrument of change and any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by educational revolution. In other words, education is the key to sustainable development.

From the summary of proven and promising practices documented by the World Bank (2007), educational policies emphasising learning for sustainable development have focused on three dimensions: namely; provision of educational opportunities, enhancement of capabilities of learners to capture available opportunities; and provision of second chances for those who are left out. Each of this policy thrust has three focal dimensions. As far as learning opportunities is concerned, each country is expected to concentrate her efforts on the
provision of basic skills at the universal junior secondary school level, diversify post basic education in a flexible manner, and improve quality and relevance of education for work life.

However, sustainable development cannot be achieved if education that is seen as the pivotal of development is not adequately funded. Analysis of public expenditure on education between 1958 and 2003 reveals; for four years i.e 1970-73, Nigeria budgeted less than 1% for education; for 24 years, Nigeria had more than1% but less than 5% budget for education and for 18 years, it had between 5-9% budgets. The budget expenditure Nigeria had for education in 1978 was 11.4% and in 1998 (10. 28%), which seems to be the highest (The Economist, 1994). This implies that for a period of 44 years out of a span of 48 years in the above analysis, Nigeria had less than 10% budget for education. The 2009 budget that was presented to the National Assembly clearly shows the underfunding of education in Nigeria. The then President Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar’Adua was realistic in his budget proposal, setting it in a context of global economic recession. He presented a deficit budget with a total expenditure of N2.87 trillion on an expected federal revenue forecast of N1.778 trillion including Independent Revenue of N306 billion leaving a financing gap of N 1.09 trillion or 38 percent (Okebukola, 2008). He affirmed that seven key projects would be executed in 2009 in power, petroleum, roads, transport, health, agriculture and Niger Delta. Education did not have striking priority, if education that is seen as one of the tools for sustainable development is being underfunded; then the realisation of Nigerian yearning for sustainable development seems unrealistic.

The Nigerian Framework

As stated earlier, a programme of education for sustainable development must address the social, economic and environmental issues relevant to its context. This is about education that is appropriate and relevant. What does this mean for Nigeria? It means for sustainable development, education in Nigeria must contend with the challenges of poverty and inequality, debt, ill-health, poor nutrition and environmental degradation and all round reformed in the educational sector. It must play the central role in establishing cohesion and
harmony within the local context of mistrust, social unrest, violence and aggression. It must bring people together in creative collaboration and cooperation to assist in breaking down ethnic, economic, class, gender and political barriers that cause people to feel alienated and marginalised. It must respond to the challenges that threaten the disintegration of the Nigerian society through, corruption, greed, insecurity and a lack of will to contribute to or protect the common good (Clarke, 2005). It must involve learning the knowledge, skills, perspectives and values that will guide and motivate people to lead sustainable livelihoods, to participate in a democratic society and to live in a sustainable manner (Hopkins and McKeown, 2002).

Meeting the capacity needs of individuals and groups to respond to the demands of the Nigerian environment cannot be accomplished through the present educational system with its narrow instrumental focus. It requires the involvement of more than the players such as the National Universities Commission (NUC), National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) Ministry of Education and other educational agencies, teachers and other educational personnel. The need exist for greater participation from partners such as; families, communities, private sector, government- local and central, non-governmental organizations, the informal education sectors through television, radio and newspaper; non-formal sector: public health educators, agricultural extension agents and others in planning and implementing the education that is required. We cannot expect the formal education system which in reality touches the children for a fraction of their lives to teach people everything about living, working and governing in a manner that will achieve sustainability for their community and the nation.

The plea is therefore being made for a participatory approach which includes national, civil society and private sector actors in the design, implementation and monitoring of sustainable development activities and in particular, education. It is against this background that the Learning City framework concept is recommended.
The Learning City Concept

Inspiration for the *Learning City* stems from international and interdisciplinary research on urban governance conducted by members and affiliates of the Toronto-based Collaborative Urban Research Laboratory (CURL). CURL was created in 2007 through the generous support of the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the Ontario government and York University to establish the first Canadian interdisciplinary research program for the collaboration between lawyers, social scientists and documentary film makers, photographers and digital media artists on projects focusing on urban governance, (Hogan & Shelton, 2007).

The Learning City provided an international and interdisciplinary two-day forum for experts’ assessment of the myriad challenges that face Toronto as a global city which was structured around five panels that address core areas of city governance (regulatory authority, employment, access, health & environment, and infrastructure). The Learning City, according Hogan & Shelton [2007] addressed the complexity of governing a global city in a fast-evolving knowledge society. As decisions by public policy-makers and private actors are made under increasing conditions of uncertainty, adaptive and responsive ‘learning’ governance modes have become the order of the day. The conference applied the concept of urban governance in the knowledge society to the particular case of Toronto to explore the various dimensions of city administration.

In addition, *Learning City* is meant to capture the role a city plays not only in local life, but also in the prosperity of the region, the province and the country in which it is located. As people’s lives become increasingly transnational and urbanized, urban governance has become one of the most important areas of interdisciplinary research, comparative study and policy-making. The conference also engaged in the debate on the knowledge and challenges faced by global cities. It can therefore be explained that the Learning City model is collaborative and acknowledges and invests in learning that is over and above institutional learning so that while the region would seek to revitalize and improve formal institutions of
learning, it also invests resources, (human, money and time) in other informal and non-formal learning spaces and programmes.

There are many variations to the Learning City concept but for this paper it is defined as a framework for organized learning in which a country mobilizes resources and its economic, political, educational, social, cultural and environmental structures towards the development of the potentiality of its citizens and the nation. Nations in this context, include cities, towns, States, Local Governments and communities.

The notion of the Learning City is philosophically grounded in the theories of lifelong learning, learning as self actualization, learning for social and economic development and learning as social reconstruction. The Learning City thus promotes certain values which are very relevant to contemporary Nigeria.

From a learning perspective, the Learning City concept reinforces an education agenda, officially acknowledges the central role of learning in helping a country meet the needs of the society, promotes cultural shifts in the perception of the value of learning, promotes lifelong learning and continuing education, acknowledges and celebrates learning as a critical tool to facilitate development, facilitate democratic communities of learning, and sees learning beyond what happens in schools, institutions of higher learning, training and workshops.

From a developmental perspective, the Learning City offers a holistic approach to community and urban development. It promotes a change in the process of governance, acknowledges and empowers people as partners in development, restores the power of the local people to initiate, formulate and implement activities and programmes regarding their own future and the future of their communities, helps to deal with threats that need urgent attention, tap into the various opportunities for social and economic growth that does not compromise the environment and promotes and celebrates accomplishments and successes of citizens. The Learning City gives primacy to the needs of the region in formulating an agenda for action such that solutions are derived from the local context, respond positively to current and emergent economic, social and environmental conditions facilitate development that is
inclusive by embracing the principles of participation and partnership and allowing all citizens to participate more freely and fully. It also seeks to build a strategy that can empower and affect social, political and economic growth in a sustainable manner.

**How Learning City works**

At the implementation level, the Learning City operates on a tripod of participation, partnership and performance. In terms of partnership, the Learning City seeks to foster partnering relationships between various sectors and institutions within and without the specific nation to access needed resources. As noted earlier, these partners would be drawn from national, civil society and private sector agencies and would depend on the educational focus at the given time. Participation speaks to finding new ways to engage citizens in how their communities will be governed, developed and changed. It is the process of involving the targets of development in the planning, implementation and evaluation of developmental progress. It implies an active role for citizens, a role established by virtue of citizenship within the county. The idea is that the objectives of sustainable development are more likely to be more relevant, more supported, more successful, and more enduring to the extent that it involves the targets in the planning and evaluation (Shaeffer, 1994).

Performance speaks to the participants being creative in learning to think of new ways to learn and to act on their own. This would include participants engaging in assessing the needs of their nation and setting educational goals and objectives, planning collaboratively and implementing educational activities across the country.

**Conclusion**

The major benefit of Learning City framework is people empowerment. People gain knowledge and awareness of their own social, economic, political and environmental conditions; they gain a more integrated view of how the world operates and how development does (or does not) occur; they become more critically aware of how their actions, individually and collectively will hinder or help the region to meet future challenges;
and help to mobilize and empower people with the knowledge and skills to participate more actively, more democratically and more collectively in the development process; they learn to take action and to construct their own futures through a process of analysis and action and gain control over the goals and processes of development within their nationhood.

Nigeria also needs to infuse sustainable development into the curriculum of education at all the levels of education to train the youths to sustain the national heritage in the future. Nigerian educationists should organize themselves in order to drive the infusion of sustainable development into the educational system. All these, if applied to Nigeria’s educational system can help in building a solid base for development that is sustainable.

**Recommendations**

In view of the central thesis of this paper, which is aimed at using education in enhancing people’s capacities as individuals and groups to improve their own lives and to take greater control over their own destinies, the following recommendations have therefore been made;

1. That government and their agencies, should strive to equip learners with required skills, attitudes and knowledge, which will enable individuals to be employable. This, if achieved will ensure that citizens are being useful to themselves, their families, communities, states and the nation in general.
2. Governments, educational agencies and other stakeholders should use appropriate education systems (policies) as instruments for social change reconstruction and rehabilitation of citizens, since education has been identified as the bedrock of national development.
3. The population should be educated to be skilled in order to meet the challenges of global change
4. A programme of education for sustainable development must be put in place to address the social, economic and environmental issues relevant to the people and community
5. Education for sustainable development must be able to bring people together in creative collaboration and cooperation to assist in breaking down, religious, ethnic, economic, class, gender and political barriers that make people to feel alienated and marginalized.

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Measures to Combat Research Phobia among Undergraduates for Knowledge Creation in Imo State

IHEBEREME, Chioma I.
chiomaihebereme@yahoo.com
+234 8033 180 807

Department of Educational Foundations and Administration
Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education,
Owerri Imo State

Abstract
The study examined the measures to combat research phobia among undergraduates in order to achieve knowledge creation. The study used Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri in Imo State as case study. An 11-item four point Likert-type scale of Agreed (A) = 4 points, Strongly Agreed (SA) = 3 points, Disagreed (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagreed (SD) =1 point was used to elicit responses from lecturers (supervisors of research work) and undergraduates. The population of the study comprised 28 lecturers and 800 final year degree students in the department of educational foundations and administration. Purposive sampling technique was used to draw a sample of 80 undergraduates. No sampling was carried out from the population of the lecturers (supervisors of students research work) because the population was small and manageable. Three research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answering the research questions whereas the hypothesis was tested using the t-test. The findings of the study revealed among others that students were frightened by critical comments made by their supervisors on their research work as well as the financial involvements for executing the research work. It was therefore recommended among others that there should be proper orientation of students before approving research topics for them and constitution of quality research assurance committee for complaints on research matters.

Key Words: Research, Phobia, Undergraduates, Knowledge, Creation

Introduction
Research, according to Organization for Economic Corporation and Development (2002) is defined as a major activity undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge to devise new applications. Research has widely been regarded as a reliable instrument to discover solutions to problems in all fields of life. Nworgu (1991) asserted that the improved conditions in human life today have been made possible by the findings of scientific research. This explains why the educational institutions integrated
As suggested by Mkpa (1997), the objectives of research undertaken in pursuit of the goals of tertiary education are to confirm existing knowledge, to discover new facts and general principles for explaining, predicting and controlling events in educational situations.

Nigerian’s undergraduates have continued to nurture fear and panic towards research. This has led to poor research quality in Nigeria’s tertiary institutions. Furthermore, Anyamele (2008) opined that some of the resultant effects of students’ phobia to research writing include; impersonation, bribing lecturers or other staff that handle research scores to award unmerited scores to them and copying their predecessors research work. Ihebereme (2009) observed that once project topics are approved for final year undergraduates, they desperately search for completed academic projects to either copy or photocopy and present as their original work. The irony is that there is continuous replication of project topics with references of more than ten years of publication. Even when there are reformation in the format for writing project, students still seem not to adhere to approved project research format. Within the period of regular contact with 2010/2011 project supervision it was noticed that the students were reluctant to include the empirical framework and the theoretical review of their study as stipulated by the new college guideline for project writing.

In as much as undergraduates lack independency in writing their final year project work, some lecturers are not adequately informed of the basic skills needed for supervising students’ project writing.

Udogu (2010) affirmed this assertion when he remarked that some students are ignorant of the improved format for research writing yet, tertiary institutions hardly organize seminars on project writing for students. The information obtained from the theoretical aspect of research taught to students as a course of study seems to be the only platform for project writing in tertiary institutions. The preparedness of the students for project writing is below ebb because they are frightened over critical criticisms made by their supervisors. Okwa (2007) suggested that orientation programme for students would reposition research writing for a better output in tertiary institutions. Oyewole (2006) noted that institutions of higher learning have lost the capacity of grooming their students thoroughly on project writing. Ononugbu (1990) identified the following reasons as being instrumental to students’
incapacitation to effective project writing. They include; lack of strategic vision toward research, inadequate teaching facilities, lack of research orientation and poor research funding. Education Trust Fund Scheme has made effort to provide fund for academic staff development but no fund was provided for students’ research development.

In the era of economic meltdown, undergraduates in tertiary institutions are given little money by their parents or guardians for sustenance. This is a crucial condition that poses a limiting challenge to writing research project among students. Furthermore, Emeribe (2009) reported that students perceive project writing as an unavoidable programme that must be accomplished for the award of the degree they are looking for. Uzoagulu (1998) also stated that students therefore, carry out research projects as mere formalities necessary for only certification. Nnadi (2008) opined that the present deteriorated status of research in Nigerian tertiary institutions is worsened as students beg lecturers (project supervisors) to collect money and write their projects for them. Despite all odds, Eyoh (2009) remarked that both the lecturers and students are poised at solving challenges to project writing. It is therefore against this backdrop that the researcher deems it necessary to investigate the ways to combat research phobia among undergraduates in tertiary institutions. Specifically, the study seeks to find out:

a. The factors responsible for research phobia among undergraduates in tertiary institutions.

b. The consequences of undergraduates’ research phobia on the overall quality of research project writing in tertiary institutions.

c. The ways to combat research phobia among undergraduates in tertiary institutions.

Statement of the Problem

The rate at which undergraduates’ copy research projects of their predecessors is worrisome. Even in the present information revolution and the emergence of electronic library and internet connectivity, undergraduates are expected to use information and communication technology and integrate it in writing their research project. Unfortunately, some undergraduates are not computer literate. Even those that are computer literate are not keen at browsing to download information for their project writing. Panic and fear seem to grip undergraduates in respect to project writing to the extent that if they are left to make a
choice, they will not hesitate to avoid project writing. The problem of the study is therefore to find out the factors responsible for undergraduates research phobia in tertiary institutions and the possible ways to combat it.

**Research Methodology**

The research adopted a survey research design. The study was conducted in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri in Imo State. The population of the study was 28 lecturers and 800 final year degree students in the Department of Educational Foundations and Administration. Sample of 80 lecturers from the Department of Educational Foundations and Administration was obtained using purposive sampling technique. 10% of the population comprised the sample of the study for students. This was to ensure that all the subjects were represented to avoid sampling error. No sampling was carried out from the population of lecturers (supervisors of students’ research project) because the population was small and manageable. The instrument for the study was the researchers developed questionnaire of 15 items structured on a 4 point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1point. The content validity of the instrument was validated by two experts in Educational Foundations and Administration, Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri. The reliability of the instrument was established using cronbach alpha procedure and it yielded a coefficient value of 0.71. Copies of the questionnaire were administered by the researcher to the lecturers and students respectfully. All the copies of the questionnaires distributed by the researcher were returned and used for the study. Data analysis was done using mean scores for answering the research questions and t- test for testing the null hypothesis. A mean of 2.50 was adopted as the criterion for decision. Any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as agreed while a mean score of below 2.50 indicated disagreed.

**Research Questions**

1. What are the factors responsible for undergraduates’ research phobia in tertiary institutions?
2. What are the consequences of undergraduates’ research phobia on the overall quality of research writing in tertiary institutions?
3. What are the ways to combat research phobia among undergraduates in tertiary institutions?

**Hypothesis**

1. There is no significant difference between the response of lecturers and undergraduates on the ways to combat undergraduates’ research phobia

**Results**

**Table 1:** Mean and standard deviation on factors responsible for undergraduate research phobia in tertiary institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N0</th>
<th>Factors responsible undergraduate research phobia</th>
<th>Lecturers N=28</th>
<th>Undergraduates N=80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(\bar{x})</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Insufficient fund for research</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Accessibility to internet is difficult</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Lack of knowledge in the area of research writing</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Critical comments are made by supervisors on students project work</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Lack of orientation on project writing</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 revealed that items 1, 2, 4 and 5 obtained mean scores above the criterion for decision (2.50) with the exemption of item 3 which obtained mean score below the criterion rule of 2.50. That means, lecturers and undergraduates accepted item 1, 2, 4, and 5 as factors responsible for undergraduates research phobia in tertiary institutions. Item 3 was rejected by the lecturers and undergraduates as a factor responsible for undergraduates’ research phobia.

**Table 2:** Mean and standard deviation on the consequences of undergraduate research phobia on the quality of research writing in tertiary institution
Table 2 revealed that all the 6-10 obtained high mean scores which were above 2.50 the criterion for decision. This implied that items 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 are accepted by the lecturers and undergraduates as the consequences of undergraduates’ research phobia in tertiary institutions.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation on the ways to combat undergraduates research phobia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N0</th>
<th>Consequences of undergraduate research phobia</th>
<th>Lecturers N=28</th>
<th>Undergraduates N=80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Impersonation</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.75 ), SD = 0.45</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.68 ), SD = 0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Bribing lecturers with money to obtain scores</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.33 ), SD = 0.57</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.29 ), SD = 0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Coping old projects</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.48 ), SD = 0.64</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.38 ), SD = 0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Replication of project topics</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.33 ), SD = 0.57</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.29 ), SD = 0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Use of old references</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.55 ), SD = 0.51</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.44 ), SD = 0.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ways to combat undergraduate research phobia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N0</th>
<th>Ways to combat undergraduate research phobia</th>
<th>Lecturers N=28</th>
<th>Undergraduates N=80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Organization of orientation exercise for students on research writing</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.66 ), SD = 0.44</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.61 ), SD = 0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Adequate time should be allotted for project writing to enable students attend properly to their supervisors criticisms.</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.55 ), SD = 0.51</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.29 ), SD = 0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Education Trust Fund should make provision for funding students’ research.</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.48 ), SD = 0.64</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.50 ), SD = 0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Install functional internet connectivity.</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.33 ), SD = 0.57</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.29 ), SD = 0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Constitute students quality assurance committee for complaints on research matters.</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.48 ), SD = 0.64</td>
<td>( \bar{x} = 3.55 ), SD = 0.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 revealed that all the items 11-15 are accepted by both lecturers and undergraduates as the ways to combat research phobia among undergraduates. This is because all the items in table 2 above obtained mean scores above the criterion rule of 2.50.

**Table 4:** Summary of z test analysis of the significance differences between the mean scores of responses of lecturers and undergraduates on causes of research phobia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Sd</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>t-cal.</th>
<th>t-crit.</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>Ho accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undergraduates</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 showed that the calculated z value was 0.41 at 91 degree of freedom and 5% level of significance. Since the calculated value of 0.41 is less than the table value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the opinion of lecturers and the undergraduates on the ways to combat research phobia among undergraduates in tertiary institutions.

**Discussion of Findings**

Findings of the study in table one revealed that insufficient fund for research, non access to internet, insufficient time frame for project writing and lack of orientation are the factors responsible for undergraduates research phobia in tertiary institutions. This result was confirmed by the high mean scores of items 1, 2, 4 and 5. This finding is in agreement with Oyewole (2006) who noted that institutions of higher learning have lost the capacity of grooming their students thoroughly on project writing. Similarly, in respect of the above findings, Ononugbu (1998) stressed that no fund was provided for students’ research development. Item 3 obtained mean score below the criterion for decision. Therefore, lack of knowledge in the area of research writing was not accepted as a factor responsible for undergraduate research phobia. Udogu (2010) confirmed this finding when he remarked that some students are ignorant of the improved format of research writing.

The findings of the study in table 2 revealed that impersonation, bribing lecturers by given them money to obtain scores, coping old projects, replication of project topics and use of old
references are the consequences of research phobia among undergraduates in tertiary institutions. The finding agreed with Anyamele (2008) who opined that some of the resultant effects of students’ phobia to research writing include; impersonation, bribing lecturers or other staff that handle research scores to award unmerited scores to them and copying their predecessors research work. The findings also agreed with Ihebereme (2009) who observed that once project topics are approved for undergraduates, they desperately search for completed academic projects to either copy or photocopy and present as their original work. The findings of the study in table 3 revealed that organization of orientation exercise for students on research writing obtained the highest mean score among other ways of combating research phobia identified in the study. This finding is supported by Okwa (2007) who stressed that training and retraining programmes for students would reposition research writing for a better output. The findings of the study in table 4 showed that there is no significant difference between the opinion of lecturers and students on the possible ways of combating research phobia among undergraduates. Eyoh (2009) remarked that both the lecturers and students are poised at solving challenges to project writing.

Conclusion

It is obvious that undergraduates in Nigeria’s tertiary institutions have exhibited phobia toward project writing. This of course, has vanguard of consequences on the quality of research in tertiary institutions. The study therefore, advanced some ways to combat the research phobia among undergraduates for quality assurance in project writing in tertiary institutions. If the suggested measures are adopted, it will eradicate research phobia among undergraduates in tertiary institutions.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:
1. Government, through education trust fund should provide fund to support students’ project writing especially in their final years.
2. Training and retraining programmes in terms of seminars, conferences and workshop should be organized for lecturers and students to update their knowledge on research.
3. Administrators should formulate a policy on the sanction that is due for any student caught copying old projects.

4. Supervisors should not hesitate to report any student that indulges in fraudulent practices during project writing.

References


Managing Research Output for Knowledge Creation in South-South Nigerian Universities

AKUEGWU, B.A.
basakuegwu@gmail.com
+234 8036 241 413
EDET, A.O. &
UCHENDU, C. C.
Department of Educational Administration & Planning
University of Calabar
P.M.B. 1115
Calabar – Nigeria

Abstract
This ex-post facto designed study investigated the extent of Deans and Heads of Departments’ effectiveness in managing research output for knowledge creation in South-South Nigerian universities. One research question and one hypothesis were drawn along the four dimensions of knowledge creation namely: socialization, combination, externalization and internalization to give direction to this study. A stratified random sample of 46 Deans and 154 Heads of Departments constituted the sample size, totaling 200 drawn from a population of 320 Deans and Heads of Departments from four (4) Federal Universities located in the zone. Data collection was carried out with the use of researchers-constructed instrument called “Research Output Management for Knowledge Creation Questionnaire (R.O.M.K.C.Q.)”. Data collected were analyzed with descriptive statistics comprising mean rating and Independent t-test. Results obtained indicated that Deans and H.O.Ds were effective in managing research output for knowledge creation in terms of knowledge socialization, knowledge combination and knowledge externalization, but were not effective in knowledge internalization. Deans and H.O.Ds differed significantly in managing research output for knowledge creation in terms of knowledge socialization, but do not in knowledge combination, knowledge externalization and knowledge internalization. It was recommended that Deans and H.O.Ds should intensify their efforts in managing research output for knowledge creation.

Key Words: Management, research output, knowledge creation, universities, Faculty Deans, Heads of Departments.
Introduction
The place of research as one of the core functions of universities has long been established. Apart from its contribution to the professional advancement of lecturers, its impact towards knowledge creation cannot be disregarded. So, management of research output in universities determine to a large extent, the capabilities and effectiveness of universities in knowledge creation. Good research and good research practice can have a powerful effect on the overall quality of the research enterprise and ranking of universities if only people know about them and they add value to their lives.

Research is a systematic attempt, search or investigation to find solutions to problems or questions in order to increase the sum of knowledge (Bako, 2005). It consists of a study and investigation to discover facts, insights and other elements central to the matter at issue. It is so critical and crucial that it constitutes an essential ingredient in determining the quality of any higher institution. It constitutes a key criteria for the promotion of lecturers, and as such, it is highly valued, sought after and requires high level participation and quality work (Akuegwu, Udida & Bassey, 2006). Research output has to do with the quality of research work produced or the final outcome of a research work. Managing research output on the other hand, involves measures put in place to control and skillfully handle research work(s) produced so that it can stand the test of time.

Research is central to universities role as veritable institutions for knowledge creation and dissemination. According to Nonaka, von Krogh & Voelpel (2006), knowledge creation is the process of making available and amplifying knowledge created by individuals as well as crystallizing and connecting it to an organization’s knowledge system. In other words, what individuals come to know in their work life benefits their colleagues and eventually, the larger organization. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) see it as formation of new ideas through interaction between explicit and tacit knowledge in individual human minds. It consists of socialization (tacit to tacit), combination (explicit to explicit), externalization (tacit to explicit) and internalization (explicit to tacit). Tacit knowledge is the personal knowledge resident within the mind, behaviour and perception of individual members of an organization. Explicit knowledge is the formal, recorded or systematic knowledge in the form of scientific
formulae, procedures, rules, organizational archives, principles etc and can easily be accessed, transmitted or stored in computer files or hard copy (Stuhlman, 2010).

Hermans & Castiaux (2007) point out that knowledge is created throughout the three main functions of universities: the education of workers-to-be, the development and dissemination of research work, and their active participation to social and economic development, which has led to the concept of entrepreneurial universities (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000; Van Looy, Callaert & Debackere, 2006). New knowledge is not held by anyone prior to its creation and therefore is not subject to transfer. New knowledge is typically intangible when it is created but it can be converted into new products, patents, publications, and other tangible forms (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). New knowledge is created through a process in which individuals seek to acquire and develop knowledge inputs through professional networks.

Research is as old as university education in Nigeria, which commenced in 1948 with the establishment of University College Ibadan, and bloomed in 1960s with the addition of four new ones. Since then, university education has grown in leaps and bounds. As university education grew and developed, research followed alongside exposing people to new discoveries and perspectives in the old and existing phenomena in all spheres of knowledge. This has helped in shaping and improving lecturers’ professional competences in particular and members of the public’s way of handling life situations in general.

In spite of this, available data indicate low levels of investment in research capacity and education. Nigeria’s number of scientific publications for 1995 was 711, significantly less than its output of 1,062 scientific publications in 1981 by a comparatively much smaller university system (Task Force, 2000). The country’s low research output probably reflects the low priority accorded to research in universities and development by government decision-makers. For example, Nigeria’s federal university system spends only 1.3 percent of its budget on research (Hartnett, 2000). The management of research output by institutional leaders has followed this dismal pattern. Some of the leaders are observed to have displayed nonchalant attitude in handling research works produced in their domain (faculty or department), and this has affected negatively the knowledge creation role of
universities. It is against this background that this study seeks to proffer solution to this question: How effective do Deans and Heads of Departments manage research output for knowledge creation in Universities?

The literature on knowledge and universities focuses on the role of universities as creators of new knowledge through research and education (Scott, 1997, Sizer, 2001). Mcfadyen, Semadeni and Cannella, Jr (2009) studied knowledge creation knowledge among university research scientists as a function of their professional (ego) networks – those others with whom they collaborate for the purpose of creating new knowledge. They proposed that knowledge creation relied, in part, on two attributes of a researcher’s professional network structure – average tie strength and ego network density and they provided insights into how these attributes jointly affect knowledge creation. Their study of over 7,300 scientific publications by 177 research scientists working with more than 14,000 others over an 11 years period provided evidence that the relationship between a research scientists professional network and knowledge creation depends on both ego network density and average tie strength. Their evidence suggests that both attributes affect knowledge creation. Moreover, according to their findings, average tie strength interacts with density to affect knowledge creation such that researchers who maintain mostly strong ties with research collaborators who themselves comprise a sparse network have the highest levels of new knowledge creation.

Research has established several benefits of strong ties relevant to knowledge creation. Individuals who have a history of interactions with one another are more helpful and accessible (Cross & Sproull, 2004), provide more assistance and support to one another (Seibert, Kraimer & Liden, 2001), and exhibit higher levels of trust (Levin & Cross, 2004). Trusting relationships facilitate the sharing of exclusive knowledge about research, that is, knowledge held only by members of the research network (Allen & Henn, 2007). Moreover, fine-grained, information that is more detailed, tacit and holistic is efficiently transferred through strong ties, and this aids in generating solutions to problems (Obstfeld, 2005). A research scientist will cautiously interact with other scientists, and if the initial interaction proves mutually beneficial, the scientist will be more likely to repeat the interaction (Bouty,
Weak ties indicate that the exchange partners in research work have thus far had limited interactions. Hansen (1999) found that weak ties transfer codified knowledge efficiently and accelerate research project completion when the needed research knowledge is not complex.

Akuegwu et al (2006) found that quality research exposes academic staff to new information and sharing of socio-cultural ideas with others. During the process of research, academic staff have the opportunity to travel outside their environment to seek information and collect relevant data. Quality research by academic staff contributes to knowledge creation and genuine indigenous and sustainable development. Hermans and Castiaux (2007) reported that the origin of research idea will have an impact on the way the individuals involved in research activities will develop competencies. They reported further that ideal knowledge process is composed of several concurrent phases: tacit knowledge sharing leading to the development of common concepts which are crystallized in a first time into written agreement and lately into publications, reports or new process. The externalization and combination modes are tools for concept creation and crystallization: individual researchers combine new and existing knowledge through presentation, telephone conversation and electronic mail. Those knowledge-mediating artifacts are then justified by academic peers through acceptance in top journals for publication as research works. The dominant knowledge conversion mode is obviously socialization, which allows for the building of trust and shared perspectives about the collaboration and its end, the research work and its deliverables. This vision leads to the creation of common concepts through dialogue and collective reflection.

**Research questions**

How effective do deans and heads of departments manage research output for knowledge creation in terms of

(a) Knowledge socialization.

(b) Knowledge combination.

(c) Knowledge externalization.

(d) Knowledge internalization?
Hypothesis
Deans and Heads of Departments do not differ significantly in their management of research output for knowledge creation.

Methodology
The area where this study was conducted is south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria, which constitutes one of the six geopolitical zones the country is divided into. Six states are located in this zone with four federal universities. The design adopted for this study was ex post facto. The population of the subjects consisted of 320 subjects – made up of 46 Deans and 274 Heads of Departments. Since the population of the Deans was negligible, the whole of them was constituted into the sample. In case of the HODs, a sample size of 154 was drawn using stratified random sampling technique. The basis for stratification was universities, and faculties.

Further breakdown of the sample indicated that 11 Deans and 39 HODs were drawn from University of Port Harcourt, 10 Deans and 40 HODs from University of Calabar, 12 Deans and 38 HODs came from University of Uyo, while 13 Deans and 37 HODs came from University of Benin – altogether yielding a total sample size of 200. The reason for this disparity in sample size was the unequal population of the Deans and HODs in these four universities studied. A 29-item instrument called “Research Output Management for Knowledge Creation Questionnaire (R.O.K.C.Q.)”, constructed by the researchers was used for data collection. It had 2 sections – A and B. Section A consisted of 5 demographic variables, while section B, which was arranged on a 5-point rating scale contained 24 items, 6 of which measured each of the four variables isolated for the study. Face-validation of the instrument was carried out by experts in measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was established through a trial test, which gave coefficients ranging from 0.63 to 0.91 – figures which confirmed that the instrument was reliable for use in achieving the research objectives. The administration of the instruments was personally carried out by the researchers. This measure resulted to a 100 percent returns rate of the completed questionnaires (instruments).
Data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using mean rating and Independent t-test. Summaries of the results were presented in tables.

**Results**

**Research question**

How effective do Deans and Heads of Departments manage research output for knowledge creation in terms of:

(a) Knowledge socialization.

(b) Knowledge combination.

(c) Knowledge externalization.

(d) Knowledge internalization?

The independent variable is effectiveness of Deans and Heads of Departments in managing research output, while the dependent variable is knowledge creation viewed from the four perspectives listed above. Mean rating is used in answering the research questions. Based on the 5-point scale, the midpoint for the scale is 3.00. The decision rule was made that items with scores 3.00 and above were accepted as effective, while those with scores below 3.00 were accepted as Not effective. Summarizes of the results are presented in Table 1.
Table 1
Mean (x) and Standard Deviation (SD) Responses by Deans and HODs Regarding their Effectiveness in Managing Research Output for Knowledge Creation.
N = 200

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/No</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Decision Rule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Controlling sharing of tacit (from person to person) knowledge</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Coordinating interaction between researchers regarding their output</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Making research output available for observation</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Building trust between senior and junior researchers regarding research output</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Initiating research mentoring between senior and junior lecturers</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Coordinating knowledge transfer in collaborative research output</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Creating meeting opportunities to discuss research output</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Organizing junior lecturers to keep tract of research publications</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Establishing linkages in handling research output</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Planning towards making research from external sources available to staff</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Controlling partnership in dissemination of research results</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Coordinating dialogue between researchers concerning research output</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Converting personal research output into formal knowledge</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Commitment towards easy access to individual research results</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Formalizing public interactions on personal research outcomes</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Establishing confidential agreements between researchers in sharing results outcomes</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Encouraging transfer of knowledge between researchers regarding research outcomes</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Planning towards exploitation of research result by staff</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Encouraging individual understanding of research output</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Creating opportunities for massive assimilation of research results</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Organizing network enhancements in research output dissemination</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Coordinating building of relationship between researchers in transferring research results</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Controlling interest reconciliation in research outputs between partners</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grand Mean(x) and SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.13</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.23</strong></td>
<td><strong>E</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Key:  X = Mean scores, SD = Standard Deviation, E = Effective, NE = Not Effective*
In table 1, item numbers 6, 8, 13, 19, 20, 21 and 23 obtained mean rating below the acceptable mean of 3.00, while the rest scored above it. Further breakdown of the results indicated that Deans and HODs were not effective in one item each in managing research output for knowledge socialization (number 6), knowledge combination (number 8), knowledge externalization (number 13) and 4 items in knowledge internalization (numbers 19, 20, 21 and 23). This means that Deans and HODs were largely effective in managing research output for knowledge socialization, combination and externalization, but were largely Not Effective in managing research output for knowledge internalization.

**Hypothesis**

Deans and HODs do not differ significantly in their management of research output for knowledge creation. The independent variable is Deans and HODs’ management of research output, while the dependent variable is knowledge creation. Independent t-test is used in analyzing data obtained. Summaries of the results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**

Independent t-test analysis of the difference between Deans and HODs in their management of research output for knowledge creation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Deans, N= 46</th>
<th>HODs, N = 154</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing research output for knowledge socialization</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing research output for knowledge combination</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing research output for knowledge externalization</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing research output for knowledge internalization</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at 0.05, df = 198; Critical t-value = 1.972

Results in Table 2 indicated that Deans and HODs differed significantly in managing research output for knowledge socialization (t=4.905, p<.05), but do not differ significantly in managing research output for knowledge combination (t=0.391, p>.05), knowledge externalization (t=0.042, p>.05) and knowledge internalization (t=-0.050, p>.05). The null hypothesis, is by these results, rejected in managing research output for knowledge socialization and retained in managing research output for knowledge combination,
externalization and internalization, because the obtained t-values are found to be higher in one variable (managing research output for knowledge socialization) and lower in three others (managing research output for knowledge combination, externalization and internalization) at 0.05 level of significance and 198 degrees of freedom.

Further observation of the results in table 2 revealed that Deans have higher mean in managing research output for knowledge socialization (X=4.28), knowledge combination (x=3.23) and knowledge externalization (x=3.15). However, HODs have higher mean in managing research output for knowledge internalization (x=2.97). By implication, this means that Deans are more effective in managing research output for knowledge creation than their HODs counterparts.

**Discussion of results**

The analysis of the responses of research question in table 1 held that Deans and HODs were effective in managing research output for knowledge socialization, knowledge combination and knowledge externalization, but were not effective in managing research output for knowledge internalization. This, by implication means that Deans and HODs in universities studied were effective in managing research output for knowledge creation.

A germane explanation for this finding is that Deans and HODs as institutional leaders at the faculty and departmental levels are conversant with research output of lecturers in their respective domain through appraisal reports sent in on yearly basis by the later for promotion of which research output is an integral part. Through this measure, they acquire knowledge of the research output of individual lecturers and as such, can initiate interaction between lecturers for discussing research ideas and making proposals there from. The knowledge obtained is applied by individual lecturers to their research needs which give them the enablement to possess detailed description of research activities (Allameh & Moghtadiae, 2010). Akin to this is the fact that information regarding research publications and conferences are made available first to Deans and HODs at the faculty and departmental levels in universities for dissemination to lecturers. So in the process of doing this, they pass new ideas across to lecturers who utilize such ideas to enhance their research capacity.
In contrast, it was found that Deans and HODs were not effective in managing research output for knowledge internalization. This is not surprising because knowledge internalization is more of an individual affair, that is lessons learned from the collaboration activities, the research work, and the exploitation of created knowledge by individuals (Hermans & Castiaux, 2007). This is in line with report of Bouty (2000) that a scientist will cautiously interact with other scientists, and if the initial interaction proves mutually beneficial, the scientist will be more likely to repeat the interaction.

Results of the hypothesis presented in table 2 held that Deans and HODs differed significantly in their managing research output for knowledge socialization, but do not differ significantly in their managing research output for knowledge combination, knowledge externalization and knowledge internalization.

This finding suggests that Deans and HODs have different ways and methods of managing research output for knowledge socialization. A plausible explanation for this outcome is that socialization emphasizes the building of trust and relationship among researchers, and as such individuals who have a history of interactions with one another are more helpful and accessible (Cross & Sproull, 2004). Since Deans, who provide academic leadership at the faculty level, and a faculty is made up of departments have more lecturers to deal with than HODs, they are more likely to build trust, establish relationships and interactions than HODs who control only a segment of lecturers.

On the other hand, the findings indicated that Deans and HODs do not differ significantly in their managing research output for knowledge combination, knowledge externalization and knowledge internalization. This means that Deans and HODs manage research output for knowledge combination, externalization and internalization the same way. That is, they manage collaborative research output, dialogue between lecturers concerning research output and massive assimilation of research output the same way.

**Conclusion**

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

Deans and HODs were effective in managing research output for knowledge creation in terms of knowledge socialization, knowledge combination and knowledge externalization,
but were not effective in managing research output for knowledge creation in terms of knowledge internalization. Deans and HODs differed significantly in managing research output for knowledge creation in terms of knowledge socialization, but do differ significantly in managing research output for knowledge creation in terms of knowledge combination, knowledge externalization and knowledge internalization. It therefore, followed that Deans and HODs were effective in managing research output for knowledge creation collectively, but differed in performing this role individually.

**Recommendations**

On the strength of the findings, the following recommendations were articulated.

1. Deans and HODs should work towards intensifying their efforts in initiating research mentoring between senior and junior lecturers. This will foster their knowledge creation roles and facilitate gaining research knowledge by junior lecturers, which goes a long way to enhance their research output.

2. Deans and HODs should, as a matter of priority, show enough commitment in creating knowledge by providing meeting opportunities among lecturers to discuss research output. This will engender the strengthening of the lecturers who are weak in research and reposition them to be more proactive towards research activities, and in the long run improve their research knowledge acquisition.

3. Deans and HODs should improve their knowledge creation roles by coordinating result-oriented dialogue between researchers concerning research output. This dialogue will enhance the sharing of research knowledge among lecturers, and expose them to new knowledge and skills in conducting research, which will no doubt, increase their research output.

4. Deans and HODs should inject new life in their planning towards exploitation of research results by lecturers. This will improve their knowledge creation efforts. They should make research output accessible to lecturers so as to enhance their understanding of result output. This will in turn equip lecturers with more techniques in research, and take their research output to greater heights.
5. Deans and HODs should initiate modalities for promoting massive assimilation of research results by lecturers. This will provide them with the opportunity of familiarizing themselves with the demands of research. The building of relationship between researchers (lecturers) should be intensified by Deans and HODs. This will help in knowledge creation by fostering the transferring of knowledge about research output between and among lecturers.

References


Knowledge Creation in Higher Education and the Nigerian Academics: Practices and Challenges

OKU, Obianuju O
uju_blosoom@yahoo.com
+234 8033 417 992
Department of Education Foundations and Administration
Faculty of Education
Imo State University, Owerri,
P.M.B 2000, Owerri.

&

IKE-OBIOHA, Benny Uzo
bennygodmercy@yahoo.com
+234 8033 297 005
Department of Educational Foundations and Administration
School of Education,
Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education,
Owerri, Imo State.

Abstract
Institutions of Higher Learning (Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education) are prepared as centres of excellence in their tripartite role as reservoir and transmitters of knowledge from generation to generation, the advancement of the horizons of knowledge by research and the provision of high level manpower. To be able to discharge their duties effectively, the Nigerian academics need to constantly upgrade their knowledge in their areas of specialization through a variety of sources some of which include textbooks, journals, attendances to conferences, seminars and workshops, researches and electronic information sources. In an effort to attain these goals, Nigerian higher institutions are bedeviled by several crises such as underfunding, low morale, violence, and cultism, and destruction of University autonomy, among others. With this scenario, one becomes inquisitive to know how the Nigerian academics carry out their Research functions in the bid to produce knowledge and the challenges they face as a means of proffering useful suggestions. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population consists of all the Academic staff of Federal University Of Technology Owerri (FUTO) and Imo State University Owerri(IMSU), numbering about 906.10% of the population made up of 35 senior lecturers and 55 lecturers below the rank of senior lecturers were sampled for the study, using the proportionate random sampling techniques. Also, some members of the appraisal committee of the two universities were used as sample. A researcher developed questionnaire validated
by the researcher’s colleagues in education administration and measurement & evaluation was the major instrument for data collection. A test re-test reliability analysis yielded a reliability index of 0.81. Data collected were analysed using mean score statistics, hypotheses were analysed using Z-test statistics. The findings of the study among others, show that uniformed criteria as specified by NUC is used in appraising scholarly research and it also indicates that evidence of stakeholders’ utilization of research funding is not a significant factor in a appraising research work. Some recommendations were proffered based on the findings: the need for NUC to ensure adequate coordination of research outputs of the university lecturers and also improved funding to encourage quality research work in higher education.

**Key Words:** knowledge creation, challenges, Nigerian academics, practices, higher education

**Introduction**

Institutions of higher learning (Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education) are regarded as centres of excellence in their tripartite roles as reservoir and transmitters of knowledge from generation to generation, the advancement of the horizons of knowledge by research and the provision of high level manpower. Even among actors that hold divergent views on various issues, consensus on the need for research in higher education is compelling. In Uganda for example, research has been disaggregated by the National Council for Higher Education, as the most illustrious function that distinguishes higher Education from secondary education (HERPNET, 2009). Globally, there are several calls by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), governments and research organizations for a vibrant research function aimed at production, distribution and effective transfer of knowledge from higher education to practice for societal development. Consequently, a good number of HEIs, research organizations and governments partner with students, faculty or both in their research efforts.

Knowledge Management as a complex function includes all the activities and processes geared towards creating an enabling environment for it to flourish, including policy making, planning, provision of resources (Staff, funding and equipment) and assurance of the quality of research processes and outputs (Lejeune, 2008). This explains the multiple challenges associated with the research function of higher education institutions, even in settings like developed western countries where appreciable support systems have been established and significant Research and Development break through realized.
In Africa and Nigeria in particular, knowledge management function of higher education seems elusive and controversial notwithstanding the consensus on its significance and the resultant attention paid to it by stakeholders. For instance, the Nigerian National University Commission (NUC) made the production and distribution of knowledge through research a major criterion for the promotion of Academic staff of Nigerian Universities. This policy has recorded some achievements and good practices. There have also been some recessions, impediments and bad practices which according to (HERPNET, 2009) have attracted significant criticism, fair and unfair, constructive and destructive. There seems to be lack of quality information as regards to both the good and bad practices and the prevalent conditions in Nigerian Higher institutions that reinforce such practices respectively.

Knowledge, according to Ali (2005) consists essentially of measurable facts, processes, practices and attitudes that have been tested and found to be correct, useful and centres on man’s continuing development and existence. There are certain factors, attributes or demonstrable events that show clearly that factual and useful knowledge have been acquired and secured in a particular discipline or field. Ali (2005) identified these factors as valid indicators of knowledge. In the context of an institution, valid indicators of knowledge productions are expressions of measures or scales for use in determining the extents of achievement on certain performance criteria or practices that constitute the operations of a system, institution and so on. Such indicators and how one performs on them can be influenced by encouragement of research studies, sound management practices, a good and responsive education and so on. Ali (2004) identified Research as the most valid sources of knowledge and valid indicator because it provides a basis for local and international comparability of research procedures and results, provides facts, evidence and sometimes the truth of an event can be verified through duplication of procedures by others working in other settings.

In a project on compendium of research results and inventions in 36 Nigerian Universities, sponsored by the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP), the International Centre for Basic Research Surveyed research and inventions in 36 Federal and State Universities founded before 1999 as well as in University based National Research Centres. Volume 1A of the 2007 published report of the project featured the disciplines in
some 32 sub-disciplines and recorded 15,020 entries as responded to by the institutions in a nation-wide structured questionnaire investigation. An analysis of the 15,020 entries according to Nwana (2008) showed that the top ten sub-disciplines in terms of volume were 


Production of knowledge through research seems to be very minimal in Nigeria and other third world countries when compared with the western countries. Supporting this assertion, Okon and Trevor (2004) reported that two named state Universities in New York spent two times more money on research in 2002 than all of West African Universities, since no money was disbursed between 1994 and 2005. The decline in funding research in Nigerian Universities may be attributed to the decline in the contributions of the University Research and funding partners such as World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Ford, Rockefeller, Carnegie foundations etc. These sources, according to Nwana (2008), were at times the only source available for funding research. One wonders how the Nigerian Academics can perform optimally in their research role in the face of the rapidly expanding volume of literature in various fields of learning and the cost associated with obtaining current literature; the bastardization of Nigerian Universities through inadequate funding and erosion of university autonomy (Enaohwo & Oku 2005) and the publish or perish syndrome that has given rise to researches that make little or no contribution to knowledge in their chosen fields (Nworgu 1991). Neale (2009) in a study of the Linkages between Research, Scholarship and Teaching in Universities in China, identified Research success as being of paramount importance in Beijing Institute of Technology (BIT). It determined to a large extent the culture of the whole institution aimed at making it “a first class and world renowned research-oriented University Professors were required to publish at least four
papers a year and there were rules about the quantity and quality of publications required for promotion. Also, development programmes were emphasized for younger staffs, which were also placed in established research groups where they were allocated resources to help them to initiate their own research programmes. The study also revealed that the best researchers attract the best Ph.D students, thereby reinforcing their position. Also, the academic staff is paid extra for engaging in research projects. The China experience seems to reflect the Nigerian experience in theory only. In practice, experience shows that research is not funded as it is expected and most Academic staff is predominately more occupied with teaching the large number of students assigned to them than undertaking research (Nwana, 2008)

This study focuses on Higher education research as practiced by Nigerian Academics with reference to University Lecturers. Specifically, the study sought to identify the criteria for appraising scholarly Research in Nigerian Universities; the extent Nigerian university Academics embark on scholarly research; the extent Nigerian University Academics use electronic information sources; the challenges faced by Nigerian University Academics in carrying out their research functions; and proffer some useful suggestions based on the findings of the study.

**Research Questions**

The following Research questions were asked to guide the study:

1. What are the criteria for appraising scholarly research in Nigerian universities?
2. To what extent do Nigerian University Academics embark on scholarly research?
3. To what extent do Nigerian University Academics use electronic information sources?
4. What are some of the challenges faced by Nigerian University Academics in carrying out their research functions?
5. How can the impact of the challenges be ameliorated?

**Methodology**

This study adopts a descriptive survey design. Two Federal and State owned universities each were used as case study. The population consisted to all the Academic staff of Imo State University Owerri (IMSU) and Federal University of Technology Owerri
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(FUTO), numbering about 906. Ten percent (10%) of the population which was approximately ninety (90) Academic staff were sampled, using the proportionate random sampling technique. This technique was adopted to ensure that the different ranks were represented. A total of thirty five (35) senior lecturers and fifty five (55) lecturers below the rank of senior Lecturers made up the ninety Academic staff selected.

Also, included in the sample for this study were some members of the university appraisal committee namely; the Vice Chancellor, 2 Deputy Vice Chancellors, 9 and 5 Deans of faculties in Imo State University and Federal University of Technology Owerri (FUTO) respectively.

The major instrument for data collection was a researcher developed questionnaire titled “Higher Education Research Practices in Nigeria” (HERPIN). The instrument was validated by two of the Researchers colleague in Educational Management and one in Educational Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability was established through a test re-test of the instrument on 20 lecturers drawn from Abia State University Uturu. An analysis of the data obtained from the two administration using Pearson r co-efficient yielded a reliability index of 0.81

The Higher Education Research Practices in Nigerian (HERPIN) questionnaire has 2 sections. Section (A) sought demographic information on the respondents while section (B) sought information on the practice of Research by Nigerian University Academics. The questionnaire was structured after the four point modified likert scale of Strongly Agree / High Extent (4 points), Agree/Moderate Extent (3 points) Disagree / Low Extent (2points) and Strongly Disagree/Very Low extent (1 point).

The mean statistics was used to analyse the data obtained. A mean score of 2.5 and above was seen as significant while scores below 2.5 were considered as low significant. A grand mean of 3.0 and above was seen as having high significance while below 3.0 is seen as having low significance.

Also, official documents on criteria for measuring University Research Publications were used for data collection.

**Research Question 1**: What are the criteria for appraising scholarly research in Nigerian universities?
Mean Response of Members of University Appraisal Committee on the Criteria for Appraising Scholarly Research in Nigerian Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item Statement</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>$\Sigma X$</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>$\bar{X}$</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The following criteria are used in appraising scholarly research :- Evidence of peer review</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Reputation of the Publisher</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Publishing in reputable Journals in one’s discipline</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Consistency of publishing in one’s area of specialization</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Evidence of stakeholder’s utilization of one’s major research findings and suggestions.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Attraction of national and international research grants</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that out of a total of six items high mean scores of 3.58, 3.42, 3.78, and 3.42 were obtained for items 1, 2, 3 and 4. Items 5 though scored significantly 2.95 but low while item 5 on evidence of utilization of research findings scored the least 2.16

**Research Question 2:** To what extent do Nigerian University Academics embark on scholarly research?
Table 2: Mean Score of Respondents on Extent of Embarking on Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item Statement</th>
<th>HE</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>VLE</th>
<th>ΣX</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How often do you: Access and read as many current textbooks and journals as possible</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Carry-out personal research in your area of specialization</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Carry-out joint researches with colleagues in related disciplines</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Carry-out joint researches with colleagues in the same area specialization</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Present paper in academic conferences</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Publish research reports in international journals</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 above shows that all the items on the extent academics embark on research scored significantly except item 6 on publishing reports in international journals which scored insignificantly (2.45) item 5 on presenting papers in Academic conference scored highest (3.08) followed by item 2 on carrying out personal researches (3.17).

**Research Question 3:** To what extent do Nigerian University Academics use electronic information sources?

Table 3: Mean score of respondents on the extent Nigerian University Academic use electronic information sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item Statement</th>
<th>HE</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>VLE</th>
<th>ΣX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nigerian university Academics use electronic information sources for research by: Browsing the internet to access relevant information</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Using software package to process and analyze data in research work</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Using index and abstract data bases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 shows that item 1 scored significantly but low while the remaining two items on the table scored insignificantly.

**Research Question 4:** What are some of the challenges faced by Nigerian University Academics in carrying out their research functions?

**Table 4: Mean score of respondent on the challenges of carrying out research.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item Statement</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>ΣX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Challenges faced by Nigerian University Academics in carrying out their research roles include: Lack of sponsorship to conferences within and outside Nigeria</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lack of current textbooks and journals in the university libraries</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Exorbitant cost of publishing articles in both local and international journals</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Inability to access information from internet as a result of ignorance of ICT usage</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The short life span of journals in Nigeria</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>High rate of copying/plagiarism as a result of lack of dissemination of published research work</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Lack of data bank</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Poor attitude to research</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lack of academic awards for outstanding research work</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Subjective assessment of published research work for assessment</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Failure to publish in foreign journals as a result of non acceptance of research reports from Nigeria</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grand mean</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that item 1 scored significantly but low while the remaining two items on the table scored insignificantly.
Table 4 shows that 8 of the items (1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, & 10) were significant factors that pose challenges to Nigerian academies while items 4 & 7 were scored insignificantly. The grand Means of 3.067 was obtained indicating that Nigerian university academics are faced with a lot of challenges.

Table 5: Possible Solution to the Challenges Face by University Academics in carry out Research Functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item Statement</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>ΣX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The challenges faced by university Academic in carry out their research functions could be alleviated by: Increasing the allowances given to academics for journal and learned societies</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Encouraging Academic to embark on qualitative research through the provision of grants by universities Authorities</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sponsoring Academics to attend national and international conferences in relevant areas</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dissemination and publication of good research undertaking and their result in forms of books and journals to minimize plagiarism.</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Organizing workshops and seminars at faculty and Departmental levels to train academics on the use electronic information sources</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Providing computers to academics at a subsidized rate by the university authorities</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Seeking the assistance of funding partners to sponsor university based researches by universities authorities</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Encouraging Department and faculties to organize seminars and conferences yearly by the university authorities to ensure constant up date of knowledge by academics</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data on table 5 shows that all the 8 items identified as means of alleviating the challenges faced by Nigerian University Academic in carrying out researches scored significantly high. A grand mean of 3.43 indicates that implementing these solutions will alleviate the challenges faced by university academics in carry out research.

Discussion of findings
Analysis of Data (table 1) shows that high grand mean of 3.21 was obtained on the criteria for appraising scholarly research in Nigerian Universities. This is an indication that the Minimum standards and Benchmark Document by the National Universities Commission regarding appraisals of scholarly research are implemented uniformly. The findings also revealed that evidence of stakeholders’ utilization of academic research findings and suggestions is not a significant factor in appraising academic research in Nigeria. This may be as a result of the unwillingness of Nigerian Government and other stakeholders to harness the benefits of Academic Research findings in the various sectors of the economy. This is a very sad situation indeed as it negates the very essence of tertiary education which according to Ivowi (2004), is to contribute maximally to the survival of the society through manpower development and research for its sustainable development and improvement of life generally. This may also help to explain the rot in every sector of the Nigerian economy.

The findings on Table II with a grand mean of 2.77 relating to the extent Nigerian University Academics embark on research revealed that their level of embarking on research is low, though significant. The findings show that the level of attendance and presentation of papers in academic conferences is quite high. This should be encouraged, since it is deemed a mark of intellectual maturity and evidence that staff are in contact with their professional colleagues nationwide, influencing them and being in turn influenced by them (Nwana 2008). The “publish or perish” policy of the NUC has also been seen as a major boost to Nigerian Academics desire to present and publish Academic papers. However, this policy has been criticized for making academics to engage in penile researches that make little or no contribution to knowledge in their specialized areas, all in a bid to keep abreast and earn their promotions (Nworgu, 1991). It is also pertinent to note that according to Nwana (2008), the inability of Nigerian Academics to Publish in international journals may not necessarily be as
a result of poor quality but may be attributed to the fact that research based on Nigerian problems may not be important enough to foreign outlets who have their own problem priorities. The findings on Table III show that the grand means of the response on the extent of use of electronic information by Academics is not significant (2.46). This is very surprising in the age of information and communication technology (ICT). This unfortunate situation may be as a result of many of the lecturers not being computer-literate or not having sufficient knowledge on the use of the Internet for Research purposes. It is hoped that the system to link all Nigerian University computer systems known as NUNET which is said to be in place and currently connecting about 1/3 of the universities would be extended to the remaining 2/3. This according to Nwana (2008) will make the establishment of the Nigerian virtual library a reality and also make the world- wide-web available to universities for academic purposes. The challenges facing the Nigerian Academics in carrying out their Research functions are quite enormous and significant as shown in table IV. These challenges are directly or indirectly linked to the chronic under funding, abandonment, rot and dilapidated infrastructure that afflict both Federal and State Universities in Nigeria (Academic Staff Union of Universities 2009). Ivowi (2005) has earlier advised Nigerian University lecturers to strive individually towards their growth and development academically and professionally so as to remain relevant in the system.

All the identified solutions for alleviating the research-related challenges that scored significantly by the respondents has a high grand mean of 3.43. It is expedient to note that the solution to the research-related challenges lies with all the stakeholders in University Education.

**Conclusion**

Since there is a consensus globally that research is an important part of the meaning of University Education and ‘underpins’ the credibility of any University Academic Staff, it is imperative that a lot of sincerity and will should be shown by Nigerian University proprietors and stakeholders towards providing enabling environment for the practice of research in these institutions.
Recommendations

The following recommendations were proffered based on the findings of study:

- The National University Commission (NUC) should ensure adequate coordination, control and supervision of the Universities implementation of the minimum standards and benchmark statements as basic of operation.
- The University proprietors are called upon to improve their funding of universities to enable the University management provides adequate support to the academic staff for Research purposes.
- The University management on their own part should supplement Government’s efforts towards funding by improving on their sources of generating funds internally and also be very prudent in the use of the available funds to improve on the research status of their academic staff.
- The recent ETF sponsorship of lecturers on conferences abroad should be sustained and be extended to conferences within Nigeria.

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CHISHIBA, G.M. & MUKUKA, Joseph

The University of Zambia
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Department of Literature and Languages

Abstract

The study compared the performance of pupils at grade 12 level in Zambian languages, French and English during a period of ten years (1998-2008). Grade 12 is the final year of Secondary School Education in Zambia. This exercise was aimed at establishing the language with the best performance during the aforementioned period. The study, which was partially inspired by the lack of a clear foreign language policy in Zambia, mostly focused on the performance of grade 12 pupils in French as compared to the other languages such as English and the Zambian languages. The results of the study revealed that Kikaonde (a Zambian language) had recorded the highest performance in the ten years of the study (1998-2008), whereas French had recorded the poorest performance. English language, on the other hand, was consistent in terms of performance as it never came out last in terms of performance. However, the general conclusion of the study is that the performance of Zambian pupils in all languages was rather poor, especially foreign languages.

Key words: School failure, prevention of failure, academic environment, secondary education and academic performance

Introduction

Available records show that there is no clear language policy in Zambia. This situation has hindered the development of a number of foreign languages, especially French and some local languages (Manchishi, 2004: 3). Therefore, this study looks at the academic performance of pupils at grade 12 level in English, French and Zambian languages in the period of ten years in order to acquaint ourselves with what is obtaining on the ground in
matters relating to language subjects, especially French language, in relation to other languages.

French language was introduced as a subject in the education system in 1953. By 1989, its growth, though a minority language was remarkable (Chishiba and Manchishi, 1998: 1). However, since the 1993 policy reforms, French has been experiencing a down fall in Zambia. The ministry of education, in collaboration with the French Embassy in Lusaka decided to reduce the number of schools offering French to 36 throughout the country from 150 schools. These reforms had a subsequent negative impact on the development of French. For instance, according to the Examinations Council of Zambia (2008), the decline in the pupils’ performance in French is worrying. Worse still, there is no inspector for French to be able to coordinate the activities of the teaching French in Zambia. This study compares the performance of pupils in French and other languages to see where French stands in relation to other languages in terms of performance.

There is no clear language policy in Zambia, except for English which was declared at Independence the official language and the sole medium of instruction in schools throughout the country. This state of affairs has had far reaching consequences in the development of foreign languages such French and the local Zambian languages. At the centre of our study is to understand where French stands in terms of performance in relation to other languages.

The objective of the study is threefold: Firstly, to determine the language with the best performance in ten years (1998-2008); secondly, to identify the language with the poorest performance in ten years (1998-2008) and thirdly, to identify the language that has been consistent in terms of performance in 10 years (1998-2008).

The study is significant not only for pupils, but also for parents, for teachers, as well as for the administrators. For pupils, this study will provide inputs that will help them improve their academic performance in languages. For parents, this study will help them be aware of the needs of their children in languages. For the teachers, it will help them appreciate the challenges that their pupils face in language learning and accordingly devise better strategies to enhance the pupils’ performance in languages.
For the school administrations, this study will provide data which can help them in guiding the institutions on how they can improve and help the pupils in other concerns. For the government/society, this study will sensitize them about the needs of every pupil in matters of relating to language learning.

Research Questions

- What language has performed the best in ten years (1998-2008)?
- What language has had the poorest performance in ten years (1998-2008)?
- What language has been consistent in performance in ten years (1998-2008)?

Methodology

The study applied quantitative methods. This was appropriate to the study owing to the fact that the study aimed at quantifying the performance of pupils at grade twelve level and comparing the results in the various languages. Furthermore, the study applied a longitudinal design for a period of ten years (1998-2008). The period was extended to ten years in order to have sufficient time to be able to make comparatives.

The population studied was pupils at grade twelve levels who had written their final exam. This choice was based on the fact that the final exam is the only time when data on all the languages can be available. Data collection was based on the secondary data from the Examinations Council of Zambia because it is the examining body which also keeps the data after releasing the results. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics on an excel software. Diagrams have been used to ease the work of comparing.

Results

Pupils’ Academic Performance in 1998

According to the diagram below, the study discovered that Kikaonde scored the highest level of performance in 1998 (65%), followed by Silozi (57%), Luvale (50%), English (45%), Nyanja (45%) and Tonga (45%). The least in terms of performance was French (41%).
The figure above demonstrates that the study revealed that Bemba (61%) and Kikaonde (61%) recorded the highest level of performance in 1999 followed by Tonga (53%), Silozi (52%), Nyanja (48%), Lunda (47%), English (46%) and Luvale (43%). Once again French recorded the lowest performance at 41%. For the reasons stated earlier.
In 2001, it was realized that Tonga (53%) recorded the highest percentage of performance followed by Nyanja (46%), Luvale (46%), English (45%), Kikaonde (44%), Lunda (44%) and Silozi (42%). On the bottom was French with 33% level of performance.

According to the diagram above, kikaonde (53%) had the highest level of performance in 2002 followed by English (51%), Bemba (51%), Lunda (48%), Silozi (48%), Luvale (46%), Tonga (44%) and Nyanja (40%). French was the least with 32% of performance.

The diagram below shows that in 2003 Kikaonde recorded the highest level of performance with 55%. Contrary to the previous year’s French recorded the second highest with 49%. Next, was Tonga (48), Nyanja (46%), Silozi (45%), Luvale (42%), Bemba (40%), English
The rise for French in terms of performance in 2003 can be attributed to the upswing of the number of pupils learning French in private schools, especially mission schools (Habimana, 2009).

**Figure 5:** Pupils’ Academic Performance in 2003

![Figure 5: Pupils’ Academic Performance in 2003](image1)

**Figure 6:** Pupils’ Academic Performance in 2004

![Figure 6: Pupils’ Academic Performance in 2004](image2)
The figure above shows that Silozi (48%) recorded the highest level of performance in 2004, followed by Nyanja (45%), Kikaonde (41%), Lunda (40%), Luvale (38%), Tonga (38%), English (37%) and Bemba (37%). French closed the least with 23% level of performance.

Figure 7: Pupils Academic Performance in 2005

The study showed that Lunda (46%) recorded the highest performance in 2005 seconded by Luvale (41%). Next were Bemba (40%), Nyanja (39%), Silozi (39%), Kikaonde (38%), Tonga (36%) and English (35%). French was again the least with 18% level of performance.

Figure 7: Pupils’ Academic Performance in 2006

According to the diagram above, Kikaonde (52%) recorded the highest level of performance in 2006 followed by Luvale (49%) and Silozi (49%). Next were Bemba (44%), Tonga (43%)
English (42%) and Nyanja (38%). French was the least on the whole with 30% level of performance.

According to the figure below, Kikaonde (46%) recorded the highest level of performance in 2007 followed by Bemba (43%), Nyanja (42%), Silozi (41%), Luvale (41%), Lunda (40%), English (37%) and Lunda (40%).

**Figure 8: Pupils’ Academic Performance in 2007**
The study revealed that Lunda (47%) had the highest level of performance followed by Luvale (43%), Silozi (38%), Nyanja (38%), Bemba (36%), Kikaonde (34%), Tonga (33%), English (32%). French was the least in terms of performance with 17% level of performance.

Discussion

At the onset of this study, we set ourselves objectives to be achieved. Now it is time to go through them one by one to see what the study has achieved.

The first objective of this study was to determine the language with the best performance in ten years (1998-2008). The study showed, though not in an outstanding way, that Kikaonde has been the language with the best performance in the ten years of our study. It is very difficult to account for this outcome. However, one of the reasons could be the role that parents play in the education of their children, especially in learning local languages. For instance, there are some parents, especially in Lusaka, who do not want their children to speak their own mother language but English. Parents play a big role in the education of children.

The second objective of the study was to identify the language with the poorest performance in ten years (1998-2008). The study revealed that the language with the poorest level of
performance in the ten years of our study is French. This state of affairs can be attributed to a number of things. First, this is a language which is taught like any other subject such as mathematics without offering an environment to practice, and the pupils’ attitude towards the language itself. Some pupils do not really understand enough about the benefits knowing French apart from being a teacher or an interpreter or translator. According to Syamujaye (1975), there is a link between one’s attitude towards the language and knowing it. Sanchez (2000) argued that academic self concept is at the base of future school success or failure. Second, the 1992 reforms and the absence of an inspector to coordinate the activities relating to French have played a role in the down trend of French in Zambia. Marcos (1990) attributes academic success or failure of pupils to academic reforms and critical situations such as the shortage of materials. Also, teachers who are not motivated influence pupils because they have nothing admire. In addition, incompetent teachers of French also contribute to the poor performance of pupils. It is very common to find a French teacher who does not even speak it or master it. French starts at high school level in public schools, but there are very few teachers of French with degrees to be able to handle pupils at high school level. Therefore, we find basic teachers teaching French at high school level (Machine, 2009).

The third and last objective was to identify the language that has been consistent in terms of performance in 10 years (1998-2008). According to the study, English is the language that has been consistent because although the performance has been fluctuating it has never recorded the lowest level of performance. It has always been in the middle. This can be accounted for by the fact that English is the official language and medium instruction such that pupils use it almost every day in their daily activities. Even though they do not master it, the fact that they use it often makes them get used to some of the grammatical rules of the language.

**Conclusion**

Generally, it can be concluded that although the performance is not so bad in local languages, Zambian pupils are not good at learning languages because the average passes are not
impressive. The scenario is even worse for foreign languages because none of them (French and English) has been top on the list in terms of performance for ten years.

References


